MUSLIM THEOLOGY

A Study of Origins
with Reference to the Church Fathers

By

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For Renee and my children, Barbara, Thea and Patrick, who either actively helped in the final preparation of this work, or patiently suffered my bookishness

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NOTE

Q. is used as an abbreviation for Qur'ān. Quotations from the Qur'ān are from Rodwell's English translation, except where otherwise indicated, with Fluegel's numbering of verses.

The MS. of Ibn Ḥanbal's *al-Radd 'ala 'l-Zanādiqa wa-'l Jahmiya* (British Museum Or. 3106), a translation of which is attached, is referred to in the notes as *al-Radd.*

This study, written in 1959-60, was approved by the University of London for the degree of Ph.D. in 1961. I acknowledge with thanks permission to quote from *Muslim Theology* by Dr. A. S. Tritton. *The Koran Interpreted* by Prof. A. J. Arberry. *Alexandrian Christianity* ed. Oulton and Chadwick. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, U.S.A. and S.C.M., London. *Muslim Creed* by A. J. Wensinck (Cambridge University Press). *Shorter Encyclopædia of Islam* (E. J. Brill). *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, by Prof. W. Montgomery Watt. I may perhaps add that while differing from Prof. Watt on a point here and there, we are all indebted to him for his Islamic studies. My thanks to Dr. E. E. Calverley who read the last proof.

FOREWORD

Students of the Islamic heresies which sprang up towards the close of the first century of the Hijra have tended to be more concerned with examining how these new theological ideas diverged from orthodoxy than with tracing their origins.

Most European scholars agree that these new trends in Islamic thinking derive from interaction with Hellenistic Christian thought following the Muslim conquest of Syria, Iraq and Egypt. They have drawn attention to the similarity of the subjects discussed by both Christian and Muslim theologians, but no systematic juxtaposition of texts nor detailed investigation of the agreement in ideas have been made. Some recent scholars have even cast doubt on the whole theory of interaction, advancing the view that external influences, far from being a main source for this new, and therefore heretical, teaching, were little more than a stimulus.

Muslim heresiographers have in general occupied themselves with the task of fitting the heresies into the allegedly prophetic pattern of the seventy-two heretical sects, with results which can only be misleading for an exact appraisal of each position. With respect to the genesis of the ideas themselves, these Muslim authorities tend to restrict themselves to passing references to foreign influences, with intent to disparage these ideas rather than to point informatively to their source.

The purpose of this essay is to seek to establish the influence of the Greek Church Fathers on the teaching of the Qadariya, the Mu‘tazila and the Murji’a, with the aim of revealing their striking agreement. The method adopted has been to set side by side the writings of such Christian theologians as Clement of Alexandria, Origen and John of Damascus on the one hand, and on the other representative doctrines of the three Muslim heretical sects.

Further support for these correlations has been found in a number of etymological inquiries which throw light on the origin and meaning of certain Arabic theological terms, otherwise hard to interpret. Some ideas advanced by early Muslim thinkers, standing alone and forming no part of a general system, will be seen to be self-explanatory when referred to their source in the Church Fathers.

This investigation into sources has resulted, we believe, in the rehabilitation of the Khurāsānī thinker, Jahm ibn Ṣafwān, and his immediate disciples, as a major influence on the Mu'tazila, a connection largely passed over by Western scholarship. The unpublished MS. of Ibn Ḥanbal's polemical treatise, *al-Radd*, here translated for the first time, gives us a clear view both of Jahm's essentially Greek position and of undiluted Muslim orthodoxy as represented by Ibn Ḥanbal.

Theological systems do not spring intact from a vacuum. They often represent the gradual cross-fertilization of a complex of opposing views brought together and recast by a mind of genius. Few legislators worked in isolation; nor did the would-be innovators of the early Muslim centuries. We must hasten to add, however, that our attempts to demonstrate the dependence of these Muslim thinkers on outside influences is not meant to detract from their great contribution to theology nor to belittle their role in intellectual history.[1] It may be said of their doctrines what was said of Origen's that "They, even where not originally evolved by his own mind, present combinations so novel, adjustments so exact, and transformations so profound, as to make them rank with the most noteworthy contribution to theological thought ever given to the world."[2]

Duncan Macdonald writing nearly sixty years ago says: " . . . We are not to think of the Muslim divines as studying the writings of the Greek Fathers, but as picking up ideas from them in practical intercourse and controversy.

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[1] For Arab contribution to western civilization, see *The Legacy of Islam*; also *The Arab Genius in Science and Philosophy*, by Omar Farrukh, tr. by J. B. Hoodie, 1954.

[2] W. Fairweather: *Origen and Greek Patristic Theology*, p. 89.

The very form of the tract of John of Damascus is significant, 'When the Saracen says to you such and such, then you will reply . . .'. This, as a whole, is a subject which calls for investigation . . ."[1]

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[1] Duncan B. Macdonald; *The Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory*, p. 132.

INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

Before entering on the subject proper of this essay, we proceed to give a brief and popular account of places and persons where and through whom this interaction took place.

This sketch, which is not meant to constitute any sort of proof, is merely intended to establish the physical possibility for such influences on Muslim theologians to have been at work. Our field of inquiry covers Syria, Iraq, Egypt and, marginally, Persia.

Mu'āwiya, founder of the Umaiyad dynasty (661–750), made the Christian city of Damascus the capital of his empire. The religious tolerance of most of the Umaiyads, or perhaps their lack of religious conviction, had as a natural result the free intercourse and exchange of ideas between Muslims and Christians. The facts about the Christian court poet, al-Akhṭal, and the high government offices held by the family of Sergius, are too well known to need recapitulating here. They should, however, be noted as an indication of the influential role played by Christians in the life of the community.[1]

Contemporary preoccupation with religious differences is illustrated by the polemical works of John of Damascus (+749); the writings of Theodore Abu Qurra (+826), as well as the theological debate between the Nestorian Catholicos, Timothy I and the Caliph al-Mahdī (c. 781). There seems clearly to have been little reluctance freely to discuss religious differences.

Al-Jāḥiẓ (+869), the famous man of letters, has this to say on the prevalent religious discussions: "... The Muslim *umma* has never been so harassed by Jews, Magians or Sabians as it has been by the Christians. They ... confront the weak minded and the common people with their heresies; they even dare approach the learned and able among us, disturbing the strong and confusing the weak. . . . Were it not for Christian theologians, doctors and astrologers, our intelligentsia would have had no access to the works of the Manichees, Daisanites, Marcionites and Platonists, and would have known nothing but Allah's book and his prophet's *sunna*.[1]

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[1] It is noteworthy that, in order not to lose the *jizia* or the capitation tax, *al-Ḥajjāj*, the Umaiyad governor, disallowed the conversion of Jewish and Christian farmers in Iraq. Sir William Muir: *The Caliphate, its Rise, Decline and Fall*, p. 351.

The fruits of such discussion between proponents of the two faiths have been noted by Muslim authorities. They tell us that the first subject of dispute was free will and that the debate centred on Syria, even if it did not originate there. As al-Subkī says: " We attacked this land (Syria) and met those who say that there is no providence (*lā qadar*)."[2] Many traditions represent Damascus as the home of heresy which Ibn 'Asākir notes and attempts to belie.[3] One well-known tradition found in the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* of Muslim and Bukhārī and cast in the form of a prophecy, says that " Satan will raise a cry in Syria which will make two thirds of its inhabitants deny *Qadar*.[4]"

Khālid, the son of the Umaiyad Caliph Yazīd (680–683), engaged Stephen of Alexandria to prepare Arabic translations for him of Coptic and Greek texts on alchemy and other subjects. He was the first Muslim to tap this alien storehouse of knowledge, and antedated by some twenty years the beginnings of the discussions on free will. This may be the reason why Khālid is sometimes referred to as the philosopher of the house of Marwān.[5]

Two Umaiyad Caliphs, Yazīd III and Marwān II, are said to have been *Qadarīs*. The latter is reported to have learned about free will from Ja'd ibn Dirham.[6] It is possible that the Mu'tazilīs were called Umawiya because the doctrine of *Qadar*, which they made one of their principles, was developed during the Umaiyad period and even under the aegis of two of the Caliphs.[7]

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[1] Thalātha Rasāil, al-Jāḥiẓ: pp. 19, 20.
[2] Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shafī'iya*, 1.50.
[3] Ibn 'Asākir: *Tā'rikh Madīnat Dimashq*, 1.74.
[4] Ibn Muttaqī: *Kanz al-'Ummāl*. I. p. 124.
[5] Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, Vol. I, pp. 242, 244.
[6] Ibn al-Athīr: Vol. V. pp. 171, 174.
[7] *Al-Intiṣār*: pp. 132, 144, 156; A. S. Tritton: *Muslim Theology*, p. 61.

The general tolerance of the Umaiyads was temporarily reversed under 'Umar II and Hishām. Persecution of religious dissidents broke out in 743 and resulted in the execution in that year of Ja'd ibn Dirham and of Ghailān the Damascene for their unorthodox views on God and Providence. John of Damascus also gave up or was discharged from his office at the Exchequer during Hishām's rule.

The question of Christian influences on Islamic thinking has often seemed to turn on whether John of Damascus was the source of such ideas. Dr. Watt has, for instance, sought to cast doubt on the fertilizing role of Christian ideas by pointing out that John of Damascus " was probably writing twenty or thirty years after the discussions started."[1] His point can establish no more than that John did not originate the debate with the Muslims on Free Will—an assertion no one would now dispute. The Muslims conquered Damascus in 638, and there was clearly time for the debate to have opened long before John appeared on the scene. John was a codifier rather than an original thinker, who relied for a large part on earlier authorities, such as Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Nemesius, Bishop of Emessa in Syria and many others.

The Camp cities of Baṣra and Kūfa in Iraq, lying close to the Nestorian strongholds of Ḥīra, at the gates of the Syrian desert, provided further milieux for the exchange of theological ideas. Ḥīra provided a refuge in the sixth century for Monophysites fleeing from Byzantine persecution. There they defended their doctrines against the Nestorians in public debates before the Lakhmid pagan ruler, Mundhir. The two sects established rival sees. But as a general rule, " to the Nestorians (belonged) the great centres of civilization of the Middle East and of Persia; to the Monophysites, the rural and nomadic centres of Syria-Arabia, then Egypt,"[2] The same authorities mention that in the VIth century the Monophysites had 137 monasteries in the regions of Damascus, Hauran and Transjordan.[1]

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[1] W. Montgomery Watt: *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, p. 58, n.27.

[2] L. Gardet and M.M Anawati; *Introduction á la Theologie Musulmane*, p. 193.

Here again, Muslim writers give us specific cases of foreign influence. A well-known tradition in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim relates that " The first to open discussions at Basra on free will was Ma'bad."[2] Ibn 'Asākir says that "The first to discuss Qadar was an 'Iraqi called Sausan, a Christian who became Muslim, then returned to Christianity; Ma'bad al-Juhanī derived from him and Ghailān from Ma'bad. "[3] Ma'bad, of whom little is known, was executed in 699, possibly in Damascus.[4] The only other information we have about him is that he was a schoolmaster and an authoritative traditionist.[5]

A better known figure is Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (642–728), a great Muslim pietist who rejected the orthodox belief that human transgressions are decreed by God. Ibn Qutaiba tells us that " He held the doctrine of *Qadar* in some respects (*takallama fi shai' min al-qadar*), but later recanted.[6] Ibn al-Murtaḍā quotes him as saying: " Everything is preordained except evil deeds"[7] 'Aṭā b. Yassār, a story-teller, who held the doctrine of Qadar and made mistakes in speech used to frequent al-Ḥasan with Ma'bad al-Juhanī and to ask: " O Abu Sa'īd, these rulers shed the blood of Muslims and seize their goods, and act and say, 'Our acts occur according to God's determination (*qadar*), Al-Ḥasan said: 'The enemies of God lie.' "[8]

It is significant that Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Ghailān the Damascene, Jahm ibn Ṣafwān, as well as two prominent members of al-Baṣrī's circle, Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā (+748) and 'Amr ibn 'Ubaid (+792) were *Mawālī*, or members of subject peoples who embraced Islam and attached themselves as clients to Arab tribes. Their espousal of new theological ideas might be in part explained by their non-Muslim background.

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[1] Cf. Fr. Nau; *Les Arabes Chretiens de Mesopotamie et de Syrie du VIIe au VIIIe Siecle, Cahier de la Societe Asiatique*. p. 62.

[2] Ṣaḥiḥ Muslim: *Imān*, trad. 1.

[3] H. Ritter: *Islam* XXI (1933) p. 58 f.

[4] A. S. Tritton: *Muslim Theology*, p. 54.

[5] *K. al-Ma'ārif*, p. 271; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī: *Lisān al Mīzān*, Vol. 6, No. 4884.

[6] ibid. p. 225.

[7] *Al-Munya Wa'l Amal*, p. 12.

[8] *K. al-Ma'ārif*, p. 225.

From Ḥīra came later Ḥunain ībn Ishāq (+873 or 877) who played a prominent role in transmitting Greek science and philosophy to the Arabs through his translations of Greek texts into Syriac and Arabic. He studied at the Nestorian academy of Jundi-Shapur, another centre of Greek learning in Khuzistān, close enough to Basra to influence the scholars there.

Jahm ibn Ṣafwān (+745) who, as we hope to show, played a key role in the early development of Mu'tazila theology, was a Persian proselyte who lived in Khurāsān. In Jahm, we have a striking example of the meeting in one thinker of the diverse schools of Persia and Egypt, probably reaching him through the medium of Nestorian and Monophysite scholars writing in Syriac. To cite a single instance, Jahm's denial of the eternity of Paradise and Hell, for which he was singled out for condemnation in the earliest Muslim creed, is Origenism, transmitted through the Syriac intermediary Stephen bar Sudailī of Edessa.[1] In this doctrine as in others, Jahm, as we hope to show, was propounding Greek Christian theology as taught by the Church Fathers in Alexandria.

Alexandria, famous for its museum or pagan university, was the home of an eclectic philosophy, a fusion of eastern and western thought. After influencing the Church in the early Christian centuries, it later left its mark on the course of Islamic thought. It was Alexandria which witnessed the first questioning of anthropomorphism, when " The Repentance of God, " of Genesis 6: 6, was omitted from the Greek translation of the Pentateuch.

Here arose Philo (born c. 10 to 20 B.C.) who propounded, if he did not originate the doctrine of a transcendental deity, and allegorized Scripture, things he bequeathed to the Alexandrine Church Fathers, later adopted by Jahm. Here also lived and worked in the second century, Basilides and Valentinus, the leaders of gnosticism, which later influenced Islam in more ways than one.[1] Here also lived the great Church Fathers, Clement (born c. 150) and Origen (c. 185–254) from whom, as we hope to show, Muslim thinkers learned to reject anthropomorphism and much of Muslim eschatology. So close were the links in Alexandria between the Church and the University that Christian priests wore the pallium, or philosophers' cloak.[2]

---

[1] Cf. O'Leary: *How Greek Science Passed to the Arabs*, p. 79.

The Christian counterpart to the pagan Academy was the famous Catechetical School where geometry, physiology and astronomy were taught, followed by philosophy and ethics. More interesting still is the fact that theology was taught dialectically: " The student was called upon for a definition of one of those words which lie at the root of all morality, Good or Evil, Justice or Law; and his definition became the theme of a close discussion conducted in the form of question and answer. In the course of these eager systematic conversations every prejudice was dragged to light, every confusion unravelled, every error convicted, the shame of ignorance was intensified, the love of truth kindled into a passion. "[3] The polemical writings of John of Damascus, Ibn Ḥanbal and Abu Qurra, cast as they are in the form of question and answer and the refutation of error, strike one as examples of the application in practice of this dialectical method.

The Alexandria academy which survived the Arab conquest was transferred eighty years later to south west Asia.[4] Mas'ūdī, tracing the vicissitudes of the school, says that it was moved from Athens to Alexandria; a part of it was then moved to Rome by Augustus Caesar, then back to Alexandria by Theodosius, and from there to Antioch in the time of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz, before finally moving to Ḥarrān (Charae) during the Caliphate of Al-Mutawakkil.[1]

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[1] Cf. Goldziher: *Neuplatische u. gnostische Elemente im Ḥadith*, Zeitschrift für Assyriologie, Vol. 22, 1909, pp. 317–344.

[2] Ch. Bigg: *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, pp. 41–43.

[3] Ibid. p. 43.

[4] Cf. M. Meyerhof: *Von Alexandrien nach Baghdad*, in Sitzungsberichte d. preuss. Ak. d. Wissensch. Phil-Hist. Klasse, 1930, XXIII, pp. 387–429.

Although scattered geographically, the intellectual centres we have mentioned, and a network of other monastic schools, were not isolated: travellers ensured some sort of contact and exchange of ideas. Religious propagandists covered vast distances. We are told, for instance, about Wāṣil b.ʿAṭā, the supposed founder of Muʿtazilism, that " Beyond the pass of China, on every frontier to far distant Sūs and beyond the Berbers, he has preachers. "[2] The Arab conquest did not disrupt the cultural and religious life of Nestorians and Monophysites. In fact, " Intercourse between Egypt, Persia and Syria was easier than before, and this favoured intellectual culture . . . "[3]

B. Conflicting Opinions on the Question of Origins

Scholars differ on the question of the provenance of the new ideas in Muslim theological thinking which suddenly appeared at the end of the third century of the Hijra. It was formerly held that origins were to be sought outside Islam, but a more recent trend would have us believe that, while foreign influences served as a stimulus, the growth and development of the ideas were mainly indigenous. We now, therefore, proceed to quote a few examples of these rival views. Alfred Von Kremer, C. H. Becker and Professor William Thomson represent the older view. Alfred Von Kremer says: " Christliche Einflüsse sind übrigens in betreff der Motaziliten erwiesen. So dürfen wir denn berechtigt sein, die allerdings neue, aber nach dem Gesagten nicht unbegründete Behauptung aufzustellen, dass die Bildung der religiösen Secten des frühesten Islams und die sich hieraus entwickelnde Dogmatic wesentlich auf christlicher Grundlage, und unter dem Einflusse christlicher Ideen stattgefunden habe; dass somit zwischen den Lehrsätzen der Morgiten und Kadariten einerseits und den Ansichten der damaligen griechischen Kirche, sowie sie besonders in den Schriften der Schule von Damascus

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[1] Mas'ūdī: *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa-'l Ishrāf*, p. 105.

[2] Jāḥiẓ: *Bayān* 1.37, quoted by A. S. Tritton, pp. 60, 61.

[3] O'Leary: *How Greek Science Passed to the Arabs*, p. 92.

Ausdruck fanden, ein unmittelbarer Zusammenhang bestehe. "[1]

C. H. Becker says on the question of Free Will: " Aber der Streit über die ganze Frage ist doch erst in den Islam hineingetragen; denn Johannes von Damascus bezeichnet den Determinismus als die islamische Lehre schlechthin, der er die Lehre von der Willensfreiheit als die specifisch christliche gegenüberstellt."[2]

Professor William Thomson of Harvard, in his review of Dr. Watts: *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, also defends the view of the role of foreign influence:

> " . . . for Qur'ānic thought itself grew mostly out of and could easily and snugly fit into Massignon's Graeco-Aramaic culture of the countries of the Near East conquered and settled by the Muslims; and proof of the presence or absence of foreign influence in the further development of that thought would depend not so much upon the natural and logical nature of that development as upon the occasions and forces which stimulated it, the composition of the communities that promoted it, and also perhaps upon the statement of the problem. "[3]

The following quotations represent the rival view:

> Dr. Tritton says regarding predestination and free will: " Probably it arose inside Islam. Contact with Christians probably hastened developments."[4] Dr. Montgomery Watt says: "there were external influences at work, but they were never the sole causes. Rather they were a stimulus to which Islam responded."[5]
>
> A. Wensinck is of the same opinion: " In the main . . . the sequence of ideas is not of foreign origin, but is indigenous."[6]

We shall go on to show in detail in the following chapters that the great weight of evidence tends to support the earlier view. In our opinion, there is little or no support for maintaining that the new teaching originated with such men as Ma'bad, Ghailān, Wāṣil or Jahm.

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[1] *Gebiete des Islams*, p. 8.

[2] *Christliche Polemic u. Islamische Dogmenbildung*, in Zeitschrift für Assyriologie, XXVI (1911), 175–195.

[3] Muslim World, XL, 207–216; 276–287.

[4] A. S. Tritton: *Muslim Theology*, p. 54.

[5] Montgomery Watt: *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, p. 3.

[6] A. Wensinck: *The Muslim Creed*, p. 52.

Jahm who, as we hope to show, greatly influenced the Mu'tazilīs, sat as it were at the feet of the Church Fathers; he was a contemporary of John of Damascus. He has received less than his due for his part in the early developments and is in fact totally ignored in the story of origins. This must perhaps be partly qualified since Dr. Pines wrote an Appendix on Jahm,[1] but it is slight and incidental. No notice has been taken of the striking similarity between Jahm's teaching and that of certain of the Church Fathers. The Mu'tazilīs took from him their doctrine of Unity, for he is the first *muwaḥḥid* we know of in the Mu'tazila sense of the term. But far from acknowledging this, they went to the length of disowning and repudiating him.[2]

Jahm's absolute Deity, without attributes—*la yūṣaf*—and non-spatial; Wāṣil's attributes which are not subsistences—*la lima'āni*; and Ghailān's free will: these were not new ideas, they are identical with Greek and Christian ideas which had for centuries past been in circulation in Christian schools and monasteries in the area.

C. SOURCES

1. *Al-Farq bain al-Firaq* by 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī, +1038.
2. *Al-Fisal fi-'l-Milal wa-'l-Ahwa' wa-'l-Niḥal* by Ibn Ḥazm, 994–1064.
3. *Al-Milal wa-'l Niḥal* by Al-Shahrastānī, +1153.
4. *Maqalāt al-Islāmīyīn wa-'Khtilāf al-Muṣallīn* by Abū Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, +935.
5. *Al Tanbīh wa-'l-Radd 'ala Ahl al-Ahwa wa-'l Bad'* by Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Malaṭī, +987.
6. *Al-Radd 'ala 'l-Zanādiqa wa-'l Jahmiya* (B.M. Or.3106) by Ibn Ḥanbal, 780–855.
7. *Al-Munya wa-'l Amal* by Ibn al-Murtaḍā, +1437.

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[1] *Beiträge zur islamischen Atomenlehre.*

[2] *Intiṣār*, pp. 126, 134.

8. *Kitāb al-Intiṣār wa-'l Radd 'ala ibn al-Rawandī al-Mulḥid* by Al-Khaiyāṭ.
9. *Al-Ibāna 'an Madhhab Ahl-'l 'Adl*; *Risālah fi-'l Hidāyah wa-'l Ḍalālah*, by Al-Ṣāḥib Ismā'īl b. 'Abbād, +995.

Nothing need be said here about the first four books on the list which are well known. Al Malaṭī's book is of particular importance because of the older material which it incorporates; I am referring to the material belonging to Abū 'Aṣim Khushaish (+867). It must, however, be used with caution. A case in point is the story of Jahm, important in the story of early developments. Al-Malaṭī relates that Jahm derived his teaching from the Sumaniya, but contradicts himself by going on to say that the arguments presented by the Sumaniya upset Jahm so much as to put him off prayer for forty days. Ibn Ḥanbal gives us the true story by telling us that Christians, or Christian heretics Zanādiqat an-Nasāra supplied Jahm with an answer. Al-Malaṭī's story of Ghailān, as I shall have occasion to point out later, is obscure and needs to be supplemented by what is told us in Sarḥ-'l 'Uyūn.

Ibn Ḥanbal's *Al-Radd* has not to my knowledge been studied with reference to the question of origins. It stands nearest to the religious upheavals which took place during the Caliphates of Ma'mūn, Mu'taṣim and Wāthiq (813–847).

Al-Khaiyāṭ's book which is, as the title indicates, a polemical work, is nevertheless of great value. It was written in reply to an attack by Ibn al-Rawandī who turned against the Mu'tazilīs after being one of them; we must discount his partisanship. He speaks of Mu'tazilism and its five principles, but ignores developments, and implies that it was a finished product from the very beginning. Al-Shahrastānī with no axe to grind makes it clear that in the days of Wāṣil the doctrine of unity was still in a formative stage.[1] غير نضيجة

Al-Khaiyāṭ insists that no one was a Mu'tazilī who did not assent to the five principles: " that God is one, is righteous, rewards good and punishes evil, that sinful Muslims are corrupt, and that men must uphold right and resist evil."[1] Al-Khaiyāṭ, whom scholars seem to accept unquestioningly, disowned Jahm for not holding the five Mu'tazila principles, while claiming Ghailān as a good Mu'tazilī as if he believed them all.[2] But all the sources say that Ghailān was a Murji'ī and so could not have believed in all the five Mu'tazila principles; Irjā', as held by Ghailān, is expressly repudiated in the Mu'tazila creed.[3] As a Qadarite, Ghailān believed in the principle of justice which stood for free will, but being associated with Ja'd b. Dirham, he may also have believed in a transcendent Deity, since Ja'd was accused of saying that God did not speak to Moses.[4] But it is certainly not true that he believed all the Mu'tazila principles.

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[1] *Al-Milal*, p. 31.

The book commonly known as *Al-Munya Wa'l Amal* published by Sir Thomas Arnold under the title of *Al-Mu'tazila*, appears to be, in parts at least, a propagandist tract in support of Mu'tazilism and moderate Shi'ism. Wāṣil is represented as a saint who sent out missionaries to the ends of the earth. Abū Hudhail is said to be the greatest man after the Companions, excepting Wāṣil who taught him all he knew. Al-Naẓẓām could repeat Aristotle backwards (p. 29). Another boast is that Harun Al-Rashid had to release Mu'tazila prisoners because he could find no one else to defend the faith against the Sumaniya who were leading the king of Sind into error (pp. 31, 32). No more reliance can be placed on the three letters in the book; one is said to have been written by Ibn 'Abbās to the Mujabbira of Syria advocating Mu'tazilite doctrines; another of which only extracts are reproduced, attributed to Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, is written in defence of Free Will. Al-Shahrastānī is right in suggesting that it was probably written by Wāṣil.[5] Further doubt on al-Baṣrī's authorship is suggested by the fact that two passages in the MS. (3998) of the letter found in Aya Sofya refer to al-Baṣrī in the third person.[1] The third letter is said to have been written by Ghailān to 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz. There is also a vestige of a letter by Ja'far al-Ṣādiq beginning with *amma ba'd.* Finally, the Mu'tazila creed included in the book,[2] ends with a boast about the numerous tomes written by Mu'tazila scholars.

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[1] *Muslim Theology*, p. 79.

[2] *Al-Intiṣār*, pp. 92, 93.

[3] Appendix 1, Creed A.

[4] Ibn Athīr, 5, 196.

[5] *Al-Milal*, p. 32.

The *Ibāna* by Ismā'īl b. 'Abbād, (Najaf 1952), and the *Risāla* also by him (Teheran 1955), are of value for being Mu'tazila works and for the personality of the author who was a savant and vizir of the Buwaihid dynasty; al-Shahrastānī calls him one of the last Mu'tazilīs.[3] The Mu'tazilīs are here named *muwaḥḥida* and 'adliya and the Orthodox *qadariya*; this by the way, confuses the editor of the *Ibāna* who only knows the Mu'tazilīs as Qadarites, not their opponents. (The discussion as to who deserves the name of 'qadarite' is found in *Al-Milal*, p.29; *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, pp. 200, 201; Montgomery Watt: *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, p. 49.)

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[1] R. Ritter: *Studien zur Geschichte der Islamischen Frömigkeit*, Der Islam, 21, (1933), p. 80.

[2] Appendix 1, Creed A.

[3] Al-Milal, p. 19.

PART I

THE QADARĪYA, OR THE QUESTION OF FREE WILL IN ISLAM

CHAPTER ONE

Predestination and the Heretical Qadarīya

We shall not understand the revolutionary character of the Qadarīya, or the free-will movement in Islam, without knowing something of the orthodoxy which upheld predestination and essayed to find support for this view in the Qur'ān and Tradition. We shall, therefore, begin with a glance at the orthodox position before expounding the Qadarī teaching which, as we hope to show, reveals such remarkable affinity with that of the Church Fathers and in particular with that of John of Damascus.

When the Qur'ān says: " God created you and your works," (Q.37: 94) it is using the language of religion to declare God to be the only Lord and Creator. The statement is innocuous and could be spiritually helpful if taken to mean no more than that God was and is a beneficent maker and provider. But this is in fact a key verse used by determinists to declare God to be the *only* Creator and only initiator, asserting that He alone is the one who acts at any time. Man is reduced to the status of a puppet who is moved about willy-nilly on the stage of human existence. Their interpretation of this and similar verses borders on perversity when they go on to assert that even wrongdoing and unbelief are not in man's hands: God must have willed them or they would not have occurred. They cast scorn on the idea that God could be disobeyed against his will.

This key verse in the determinist's armoury must have remained in the forefront of the discussion of free will for generations. We find Ismā'īl b. 'Abbād, one of the late Mu'tazilīs, trying to prove to determinists that this verse has nothing at all to do with determinism. He says that the context made it clear that the " works " referred to are man-made idols and as such are materials created by God and are not to be worshipped.[1]

A. Ghailān:

(a) *Free Will*

Ghailān, or to give him his full name, Abū Marwān Ghailān b. Marwān al-Dimashqī al-Qubtī, was a contemporary of John of Damascus and a fellow Damascene. He is important in the story of origins, and particularly in that of the Qadarīya movement as he was one of the earliest to teach free will that we know anything about. He was put to death by order of the Caliph Hishām (724–743) because of his Qadarī views. His being a *mawla* of Syrian origin already suggests that the new teaching came from outside Islam.

The story of Ghailān's audience with the Caliph 'Umar II (717–720) as found in al-Malaṭī,[2] is often used as a source for Ghailān's views. Dr. Montgomery Watt, for instance, bases his discussion of Ghailān's ideas on this account. But he himself admits that the Qur'ānic quotations used by Ghailān in defence of his views and the counter-quotations advanced by the Caliph seem inconclusive. "There is no indication at all of how the one quotation is supposed to counter the other, and the reader is left to puzzle it out for himself."[3]

A fuller and more correct account is to be found in *Sarḥ al-'Uyun*[4] by Ibn Nubāta (+768 A.H.). In it Ghailān quotes in support of free will: "In a right way have we guided him, be he thankful or ungrateful" (Q.76: 3), meaning to say that man may respond to God's guidance either in gratitude and obedience or ingratitude and unbelief. But the Caliph countered by asking him not to pause there but to read to the end of the Sura (vv. 29, 30): "And whoso willeth, taketh the way to his Lord; but will ye shall not, unless God will it".

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[1] Ibn 'Abbād: *Al-Ibāna*, p. 19.

[2] *Al-Tanbīh*, pp. 158, 159.

[3] Montgomery Watt: *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, pp. 123, 124.

[4] *Sarḥ al-'Uyūn*, Cairo ed. 1957, p. 156.

Ibn Nubāta goes on to tell how Hishām b. ʻAbd al-Malik set al-Awzāʻī[1] to debate with Ghailān. Al-Awzāʻī ʻproves' to Ghailān (i) that God forbade eating from the tree, but that Adam had to eat since God so ordained it قضى عليه فاكل منها; (ii) that God ordered Satan to worship Adam but then intervened and did not let him do so حال بين ابليس والسجود; (iii) that he prohibited the eating of that which dies of itself but permitted it to those who partake of it under constraint (Q.2: 168).[2] This is the kind of determinism which the Qadarī and the Muʻtazilīs thought so dishonouring to God and which they fought with all their strength.

Al-Ṭabarī reports that in one debate (there must have been many) Ghailān asked: Does God will that He should be disobeyed? His opponents countered with the question: Is He disobeyed against His will? Ghailān was silenced.[3] The creed named *Waṣiyat Abī Ḥanīfa* (ninth century) tries to draw a fine distinction between God's will and His good pleasure: He is not pleased with sin, as the Book says (Q.39: 9) but He must will it or it could never happen, because He could not be disobeyed against His will.

" Sin ", says the *Waṣīya* in a characteristic piece of casuistry, " is not in accordance with Allah's commandment, yet in accordance with His will, not in accordance with His loving (it), yet in accordance with His preordained decision; not in accordance with His good pleasure, yet in accordance with His ordaining and creating; not in accordance with His help, yet in accordance with His abandoning and His *ʻilm*; not in accordance with His *maʻrifa* yet in accordance with His writing on the preserved tablet."[4]

(*b*) *The Innate Idea of God*

Ghailān, we learn from al-Shahrastānī,[5] drew a distinction between primary and secondary knowledge. "Faith," said Ghailān, "is the secondary knowledge of God: the first knowledge is innate and compulsory فطرية ضرورية for knowledge is essentially twofold: there is the innate knowledge *fiṭriya*, that the world has a creator and the soul a maker; this knowledge cannot be named 'faith'. Faith is the second and acquired knowledge." This account of Ghailān's views is confirmed by al-Baghdādī who reports: "In the history of heretical sects, Zurqān states that, according to Ghailān, faith is a confession by word of mouth but that knowledge of God is inherent and is an act of God."[1]

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[1] Al-Awzāʻī, a Syrian traditionalist and jurist, was born at Baalbeck, lived at Damascus and at Beirut, where he died in 157 A. H. D. B. Macdonald, p. 98.

[2] *Sarḥ al-ʻUyūn*, p. 167.

[3] *Al-Ṭabarī* 2nd Series, III p. 1733.

[4] Wensinck: *The Muslim Creed*, p. 126. See p. 85, n. 5.

[5] *Al Milal wa-'l Niḥal*, p. 108.

This same distinction between a knowledge of God which is innate and one which is acquired by revelation is found in an early tradition in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim[2], where we are told that *amānah* (Hebrew *emūnah*), explained by Nawawī as the law which is binding (taklīf), first enters the inner hearts of men (*jiẓr qulūb al-rijāl*), and is then followed by the Qur'ān and Sunna.

It would be wrong to presume that Ghailān was in any way the first to draw this distinction between primary and secondary knowledge. Dr. Watt gives him perhaps too much importance when, in attributing this distinction to him, he calls him a "thinker of some subtlety."[3]

Turning to the Church Fathers, we find that Ghailān's rudimentary statement of the idea had long before been woven by them into their theological system. Origen quotes St. Paul in support of the view that the heathen who were without a revelation from God had a natural religion, having had the law written on their hearts (Romans 2: 15). But they resisted and repressed the knowledge of a supreme creator in spite of the evidence of His creative work in nature. (Romans 1: 18–20).

"Paul", continues Origen, "as a lover of truth, says of certain wise men among the Greeks, when their statements were true, that 'although they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful'. And he bears witness that they knew God"[1]. Origen thus complains that Plato who spoke so nobly of the 'chief good' as "bursting forth suddenly as a light in the soul" could yet go down to the Piraeus and offer up a prayer to Artemis, as if she were God, and that Socrates could " offer a cock to Aesculapius".[2] " It is not therefore a matter of surprise ", Origen says, " that the same God should have sown in the hearts of all men those truths which he taught by the Prophets and the Saviour ". Origen finds an allusion to the twofold knowledge of God in God's writing the ten commandments twice: the first represents the innate law written on man's heart, the second is " the prophetic word preparing the soul as it were, after the first transgression, for the writing of God a second time ".[3]

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[1] Al-Baghdādī: *Moslem Schisms and Sects*, tr. A. S. Halkin, p. 7.

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Vol. II, p. 168, Cairo 1929.

[3] Montgomery Watt: *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, p. 42.

Clement had already written: " The Father, then, and Maker of all things is apprehended by all things, agreeable to all, by innate power and without teaching. But no race anywhere of tillers of the soil, or nomads, and not even of dwellers in cities, can live without being imbued with the faith of a superior being."[4]

The same idea is found in Tertullian: " From the beginning the knowledge of God is the dowry of the soul, one and the same amongst the Egyptians, and the Syrians and the tribes of Pontus. The greater part, therefore, of the human race although they know not even the name of Moses, much less his writings, yet know the God of Moses."[5]

The years between Ghailān (+742) and Abū Hudhail (+840) worked a change: Aristotelian logic had by then come to the Muslims.[6] They were now trying to differentiate not between an innate and a revealed knowledge of

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[1] *Contra Celsum* 3: 47.
[2] Contra Celsum 6: 3, 4.
[3] Ibid. 1: 4. Cf. 7: 37, 46.
[4] Clement: *Stromata* 5: 14, p. 474.
[5] Contra Marcion X, p. 278. Cf. Irenaeus Adv. Haer. Chap. XV, p. 479; *First Apology of Justin*, Chap. X, p. 165.
[6] *Maqālāt* ii, p. 485.

God, but between irrational belief on the one hand, and rational belief and reasoned judgement on the other.

Abū Hudhail said that since the thinking man precedes revelation, he is therefore obliged to know God by demonstration (dalīl), rather than as a suggestion coming to him from outside (khāṭir).[1] Al-Naẓẓām called it *naẓar wa-stidlāl*, logical demonstration and reasoned proof. Clement of Alexandria said the same thing: "What is commonly referred to as knowledge in which the natural as well as the irrational faculties participate is not knowledge." "Knowledge in a special sense is characterized by judgement and reason."[2]

B. DETERMINISM IN THE QUR'ĀN AND TRADITION

Determinism and free will are both to be found in the Qur'ān; the denial and affirmation of man's independence are sometimes found side by side: "The truth is from your Lord; let him who will believe, and let him who will be an unbeliever" (Q.18: 28). "Verily this (Qur'ān) is a reminder, and whoso willeth, taketh the way to his Lord; but will, ye shall not unless God will it (Q.76: 29, 30).

We get, on the one hand, passages which declare God's good intentions, such as : "We wished to be gracious to those who were weakened in the earth and to make them spiritual leaders and to make them heirs" (Q.28: 4); God desires not injustice unto the worlds" (Q.3: 104); "God wishes to explain to you, to guide you into the ordinances of those who were before and to turn towards you, for God is knowing wise. God wishes to turn towards you, but those who follow their lusts wish that ye swerve with a mighty swerving. God wishes to make it light for you, for man was created weak" (Q.4: 31, 32); God does not wish to make any hindrance for you; but He wishes to purify you and to fulfil His favour upon you" (Q.5: 9); "God only wishes to take away from you the horror as people of His house and to purify you thoroughly" (Q.33: 33).

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[1] *Al-Milal*, p. 36.

[2] *The Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria*, pp. 146–157. *Stromata*, Book II, Chap. iv, and Book VI, Chap. xviii.

On the other hand we are confronted with God's seeming arbitrariness: " If God pleased, He would bring them all into guidance ", (Q.6: 35); "God's is the east and the west, He guides whom He will unto the right path ", (Q.2: 136); " God calls unto the abode of peace and guides whom He will into the right path ", (Q.10: 26); " God elects for Himself whom He pleases, and guides unto Himself him who turns repentant ", (Q.42: 12).

The following verses are purely predestinarian: " God leads whom He will astray and guides unto Him those who turn again " (Q.13: 27); " He leads astray many and guides many " (Q.2: 24); " Verily, God leads astray whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases", (Q.35 : 9); "And whom God shall please to guide, that man's breast will He open to Islam; but whom He shall please to mislead, strait and narrow will He make his breast . . ." (Q.6 : 125).

Other unambiguously predestinarian passages in the Qur'ān are those where God is spoken of as sealing, impressing and veiling man's heart, but these are too well known to list here.[1]

Professor Wensinck examining the above and other verses says: " These quotations show that the advocates of predestination as well as those of free will could claim a scriptural basis for their views. Yet, to all appearance, the main attitude of Islam was in favour of predestination."[2] D. B. Macdonald as well as A. S. Tritton further maintain that there is a growing emphasis in the later parts of the Qur'ān on the control of man by God.[3]

Unlike the Qur'ān which can be quoted to support both free will and determinism, Tradition is unequivocally on the side of determinism. The following are some of the better known traditions on the subject;

Ibn al-Dailamī says: " I visited 'Ubay ibn Ka'b and said to him: Doubts concerning predestination have arisen in my heart. Possibly Allah will make them vanish if you communicate to me a tradition on this subject. He answered: If Allah should punish the inhabitants of His heavens and His earth, He would not thereby do injustice. And if you should spend in the path of Allah an amount larger than mount Uḥud, He would not accept it from you unless you believe in the decree and knowledge, that what reaches you could not possibly have missed you, and what misses you could not possibly have reached you. And if you should die in a different conviction, you would go to hell." Ibn al-Dailamī continues: "Then I went to 'Abdallah b. Mas'ūd and heard the same from him, and likewise from Ḥudhaifa b. al-Yamān. Then I went to Zaid b. Thābit who communicated to me a similar tradition on the authority of the Prophet."[1]

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[1] All relevant passages are to be found in Sweetman: *Islam and Christian Theology*, Part I, Vol, 2, pp. 157–163.

[2] Wensinck: *Muslim Creed*, p. 51.

[3] *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 200; Tritton: *Muslim Theology*, p. 7.

Al-Bukhārī and others quote a tradition in which Adam demonstrates to Moses that his fall was preordained: "The Prophet of God said that Adam and Moses maintained a debate before God, and Adam got the better of Moses, who said; 'Thou art that Adam, whom God created and breathed into thee His own Spirit, and made the angels bow down before thee, and placed thee in Paradise; after which, thou threwest man upon the earth, from the fault which thou didst commit.' Adam replied: 'Thou art that Moses, whom God selected for His prophecy and to converse with, and He gave thee twelve tablets, in which are explained everything, and He made thee His confidant and the bearer of His secrets; then how long was the Bible written before I was created?' Moses said, 'Forty years'. Then said Adam: 'Didst thou see in the Bible that Adam disobeyed God?'. 'Yes'. 'Dost thou reproach me on a matter which God wrote in the Bible before creating me?' "[2]

A man's sex, the length of his life, his sustenance and his eternal destiny—whether Hell or Paradise—are also said to be preordained in traditions quoted by both Muslim and Bukhārī.

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[1] Abū Dāwūd, Sunna b. 16, quoted from *Muslim Creed*, pp. 107, 108.

[2] Al-Bukhārī: *Qadar* b. 11 quoted from *The Faith of Islam*, E. Sell, p. 173.

" When the embryo has passed two and forty days in the womb, Allah sends an angel, who gives it a form and creates his hearing, sight, skin, flesh and bones. This having been done, the angel asks: 'O Lord, shall this be male or female?' Then the Lord decrees what He pleases, and the angel writes it down. Then he asks: 'O Lord, what shall be his term?' Then the Lord will say what He pleaseth, and the angel will write it down. Thereupon the latter will go away with the scroll in his hand, and nothing will be added to or subtracted from the decree."[1]

". . . Verily (each) one of you is assembled in his mother's womb forty days; then he becomes a clot for a similar period, and then a lump of flesh for the same period. An angel is sent to him and given four commands with reference to his sustenance, the duration of life, and whether he is to be wretched or happy . . . ."[2]

And again from Muslim: " It may be that one of you performs the works of the people of Paradise, so that between him and Paradise there is only the distance of an arm's length. Then his book overtakes him and he begins to perform the works of the people of Hell, the which he will enter . . . ."[3]

Professor Wensinck, summing up, says: " Tradition has not preserved a single *ḥadīth* in which *liberum arbitrium* is advocated ".[4]

An eloquent and fully-developed defence of the orthodox position on predestination is made by 'Abdallah b. As'ad al-Yāfi'ī (c.1298). He argues that predestination does not detract from the justice of God, supporting his case for God's eternal decrees with thirty Qur'ānic verses and an equal number of traditions. The following passage is characteristic of his views:

" You must know . . . that reason and revelation alike go to prove that no evil or injustice is to be imagined of God. We will take reason first and tradition after. An unjust person is one who appropriates what does not belong to him; this opinion was entertained by all the rightly guided Imams and their followers and was believed in by all Muslims before heresy made its appearance. God cannot be said to appropriate what does not belong to Him: He is not turning against a ruler who must be obeyed, since there is no owner beside Him, nor any ruler to rule Him: He is the slave holder to rule as He pleases. " Is not creation and the Command His?" (Q. 7: 52). His is the glory, the conquest, the might, the pride, the power, the highness, the knowledge, the wisdom, the rule and the authority. Nothing happens under His rule but what He wishes to happen, nothing but what has been fore-ordained. He gives and withholds, He hurts and benefits, abases and exalts; He draws and repulses, He scatters and gathers. Every good which He bestows is by grace and favour and every injury justice; He has to give no account for what He does as men have. The terms 'good' and 'evil' may be used in different senses . . . what concerns us is how they are related to future reward and punishment, but this is not for reason to judge but God's law. (These points are to be considered:) 1. " We never punished until we had first sent an apostle." (Q.17: 16). 2. Reason is no guide to the future life and its reward and punishment. 3. A bad deed such as a lie may cease to be evil if its good points preponderate, for it is an accepted rule that the whole is greater than the part. Mu'tazilite teaching is therefore false which asserts that our reason can tell right from wrong. 4. It has been proved that man's acts are performed by the power and will of God, and that the creature cannot himself originate things.

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[1] Muslim: *Qadar*, trad. 3 from *Muslim Creed*, p. 54.

[2] Al-Bukhārī: *Qadar* b. I trad. 1. Quoted from *The Traditions of Islam*, by A. Guillaume, p. 172.

[3] Muslim: *Qadar*, Trad. 1. Quoted from *Muslim Creed*, p. 55.

[4] *Muslim Creed*, p. 51.

" Al-Ghazālī says, and other Imams agree with him: How can insects like spiders, bees and the rest originate things by themselves and produce things of the most delicate make, enough to bewilder the cleverest? How can they do these things themselves without the Lord of Lords when they do not even know what profitable things they make? No, no, that cannot be! The kingdom and all things belong to the mighty one."[1]

The following letter alleged to have been written by Ghailān to 'Umar II, illustrates the Mu'tazilite position which is attacked by al-Yāfi'ī:

" Can you, O 'Umar, imagine one wise who makes a thing, then proceeds to find fault with it for being what it is? Or one who punishes for things he had himself decreed, or one who decrees things for which he will punish? Can you imagine one in his senses who invites men to walk in the right way and then sets about leading them astray? Or, one merciful who will burden others with what they cannot do, and punish them for being disobedient? And can you imagine one just who will aid and abet injustice? Lastly, can you imagine one truthful who will cause others to lie? "[2]

C. The Origins of Free Will

The new ideas on free will or man's independence which came in about the year 80 A.H. were anathematized as the worst of heresies by Muslim orthodoxy. The Qadarīs, or upholders of free will, were branded as Parsis and dualists for setting man up as a co-creator with God by asserting that he initiated his own actions and determined his own destiny. A tradition ascribed to the Prophet runs: " The Qadarīs are the dualists (*majūs*) of this nation; do not visit them when sick and do not attend their funerals."[3]

Dr. Thomson's account of the origins of the Qadarīya movement can be taken as a statement of the classical view long held by Muslim and European scholars alike that the rise of the Qadarīs was due entirely to Christian influence:

" The cradle of the Qadarīya movement was Christian country. The first to speak of Qadar was Ma'bad al

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[1] 'Abdallah b. As'ad al-Yāfi'ī: *Marham al-'Ilal al-mu'addila fi daf'al-shubh wa-'l radd 'ala 'l-Mu'tazila*, p. 33.

[2] *Al-Munya*, p. 16.

[3] Ibn Qutaiba; *Tā'wīl Mukhtalif al-Ḥadīth*, pp. 96–98.

Juhanī who came from Basra and thus from Monophysite or Nestorian country. Muslim authorities say further, that he learnt it from a Christian named Sausan. His opinion cost him his life, he was executed in Damascus in A.D. 699. Another man was Ghailān of Damascus who was put to death by Hisham b. 'Abd al Malik in 743. A third was Shabīb al-Najrānī, who hailed from Najrān, a Christian land prior to Islam."[1]

The German scholar H. Ritter also agrees that the idea of free will had Christian origins, suggesting that when the enemies of the Qadarīs pointed to its foreign origin in condemnation, they may well have been recollecting what in fact took place: " Verhasste Lehren hat man zu allen Zeiten des Islams gern als von den Ungläubigen stammend hingestellt, um sie zu diskreditieren; aber freilich kann ein solchen Ableitungen sich auch eine Erinnerung an den wahren Sachverhalt bewahrt haben."[2]

The thesis that Christian influence lies at the origin of Qadarī ideas has however been questioned. Two related arguments have been advanced in this respect, both seeking to prove that these ideas sprang primarily from indigenous sources. The first suggests that the real antecedents of the Qadarī doctrine of free will were the views on the justice of God held by the seventh century Khawārij, the earliest Muslim schismatic sect. The second argument casts doubt on the possible derivation from Greek Christian theology of the Muslim idea of free will since there is no exact equivalent in Arabic for the Greek *autoexousios*.

(*a*) *The Justice of God*

The first objection then is that the doctrine of human responsibility with its corollary the doctrine of Qadar developed logically from native Muslim antecedents, namely the conception of the Khawārij of a " righteous God demanding righteousness from His creatures."[1] But there is little or nothing to prove that the Khawārij, a pious but fierce and fanatical sect, had any such conception of God. They held fast to the Qur'ān and tried to conform to it whatever the cost, but they appear to have had no conception of justice and certainly none of a righteous God. Even great Muslim theologians who lived long after them and had far better opportunities to acquire a broader conception of God, persistently ascribed tyranny to God.

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[1] The Moslem World. XL. 207–216: 276–287.

[2] *Der Islam*, Band xxxi, p. 58.

[3] W. Montgomery Watt: *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, p. 38.

Al-Ash'arī, for instance, says: " . . . Allah, therefore, is Master of His creation: He does what He wishes and decides what He desires, and if He were to send all created beings to Paradise there would be no injustice done, or if He sent them all to Hell there would be no tyranny. Wrong-doing (*ẓulm*) consists of disposing of things one does not own or misplacing them. But since He is the absolute owner, no wrong-doing can be imagined of Him, nor can injustice be ascribed to Him."[1]

Another important theologian, Ibn Ḥazm (+1069), also appears to have little conception of God's righteousness:

"Nothing is good but Allah has made it so, and nothing is evil, but by His doing. Nothing in the world, indeed, is good or bad in its own essence; but what God has called good is good, and the doer of it is virtuous; similarly what God has called evil is evil and the doer of it is a sinner. All depends upon God's decree, for an act that may at one time be good may be bad at another time . . . ." Ibn Ḥazm continues: "Some people say that tyranny is evil (*ẓulm*). If you ask in what tyranny consists, the answer will be that it means slaying or torturing men, or seizing their property. Further, suicide and self-mutilation are sins. But God permitted the seizure of the property of their enemies by the Muslims in Khurasān, and the exposure of oneself to slaughter 'On the path of Allah' (in holy war) is expressly approved by the Koran."

Ibn Ḥazm concludes: "It is clear therefore that only that is *kufr* which God declares to be so. Similarly nothing is wrong (*ẓulm*) except what God forbids. God Himself can do no wrong, and if He punishes a man for not carrying out a command of which he is incapable, then that cannot be a wrong since God does not declare it so."[1]

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[1] Al-Shahrastānī, Cureton ed. I, p. 73.f.

(*b*) *Autoexousios* and *Tafwīḍ*

The second serious objection to the view that Qadarī ideas on free will were foreign in origin turns on a terminological point. Dr. W. Montgomery Watt asserts, for example, that " the whole formulation of the problem (i.e. free will) in Islam is different, since there is nothing exactly equivalent to the *autoexousios* of the Greek."[2]

The fact is that they had in the Arabic *fawwaḍa*, which was in use at the time, a perfectly good equivalent for *autoexousios*. Fawwaḍa means the entrusting by God to man of the power to act and choose through *tafwīḍ*, that is delegation. It is significant that one of the seven Qadarī groups, as recorded in the earliest account of the movement[3] was called the *Mufawwiḍa*, because they believed that they were empowered to act without God's help or guidance. Even the doing of good acts was in their own hands. This carried them a step beyond the general upholders of free will who would only grant that man had power to do evil, a view also attributed to Ḥasan al-Basrī.

Tafwīḍ used in this sense is found in a tradition which quotes 'Ali as saying that the extent of man's freedom lay between *jabr* and *tafwīḍ*, i.e. between compulsion and delegation; being neither the one nor the other.[4] It is evident, therefore, that *tafwīḍ* is here contrasted with *jabr*, or absolute determinism and stands for free will.

Al-Ash'arī, in an account of Shi'ite sects, describes the views of one of them as being neither *jabr*, as held by Jahm, nor *tafwīḍ*, as held by the Mu'tazilīs, using the latter term, therefore, as an exact equivalent of *autoexousios*, or free will.[5]

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[1] Ibn Ḥazm: *Al-Fiṣal*, III, 101 f, quoted from R. Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam*, pp. 206–208.

[2] W. Montgomery Watt: *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, p. 58, n. 27.

[3] Al-Malaṭī: *Al-Tanbih*, p. 133.

[4] Kanz al-'Ummāl, vol. I, p. 313.

[5] Al-Ash'ari: Maqālāt, I, 40, 41.

A further terminological point which should be considered in this connection is that Greek writers had another word in use for free will, besides *autoexousios*, namely *eph'hymin*. Origen, for instance, uses the term to mean free will in his arguments against determinists. His translators inform us that they translated the phrase *to eph'hymin*—literally "that which is in our power"—as "free will." Their justification is that "the phrase had become through usage a recognized term, so much so indeed that it signified generally the power of choice, and could be used of a third person, in which case the 'our' had no significance . . . "[1]. The Arabic translator of John of Damascus[2] uses the same Arabic term of *tafwīḍ* for his *eph'hymin*, as in the following quotation: " . . . for those (actions) that are in our power are outside the sphere of Providence and within that of our free will . . . "[3]

لان الافعال المفوضة الينا ليس هى من افعال عناية الله لكنها افعال عزمنا المستولى على ذاته وافعاله

τε γαρ'εφ' ἡμῖν ου της προνοιας ἐστιν ἀλλὰ τοῦ ἡμετὲρου αὐτεξουσίον

One should in all fairness add, however, that *tafwīḍ* does not seem to have been in popular use. This may have been because the term was not Qur'ānic in origin. It was also ambiguous, since it was sometimes used in the sense of man's trust in God in issues beyond his comprehension which is a notion far removed from that of free will.[4]

D. JOHN OF DAMASCUS AND THE QADARĪYA

Most discussions on the question of the origins of Muslim theology, and in particular of the new ideas which came in with the Qadarīya, the Jahmiya and the Mu'tazila, have been confined to general statements about the possible sources of these new trends in Islam. Little or no systematic attempt has been made to lay bare these sources by a juxtaposition of texts. Scholars have pointed to similarities between the teaching of the Church Fathers and the so-called heretical views which gained currency at the close of the first century of the Hijra, without always quoting chapter and verse.

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[1] J. E. L. Oulton and H. Chadwick: *Alexandrian Christianity*, Vol. II. *Treatise on Prayer* (by Origen), Chapter vi, 2. p. 251, n.337.

[2] Graf has shown that the Damascene's works, *Capita Philosophica* and *De Fide Orthodoxa*, were translated from Greek into Arabic under the title *Iḍaḥ al-Ṣariḥ fi'l Madhhab al-Ṣaḥiḥ*, by Antonius, Superior of St. Simon's Monastery, who lived in the second half of the tenth century. G. Graf: *Geschichte der arabischen christlichen Literatur*, Vol II, p. 43.

[3] *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Book II, Chap. 29, p. 41. J. P. Migne, p. 964.

[4] For this sense of *tafwīḍ* see Al-Qasṭallānī; *Irshād al-Sarī fi Sharḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. VII, p. 358.

We have therefore attempted to put side by side representative passages from the Damascene and the Qadarīya, in the belief that their striking similarities constitute the best evidence for the Christian source of the new Islamic teaching.

This section is restricted to an exposition of the views of the Qadarīya as found in al-Malaṭī's *al-Tanbīh* which incorporates an account of Muslim sects by Abū 'Āṣim Khushaish b. Aṣram.[1] The Qadarīs were the earliest sectarians and this account is the earliest existing source on the subject. We have chosen John of Damascus to represent the views of the Church Fathers first, because he was a contemporary of such Muslim innovators as Ja'd b. Dirham and Ghailān, and secondly because his authoritative account of Christian teaching represents a systematization of the beliefs of a multitude of earlier Church Fathers (as we tried to show in our introductory chapter). On the subject of the similarities between John of Damascus and the Mu'tazila we shall have more to say below.

We proceed to list alternately representative quotations on the subject of free will from the Qadarīya and the Damascene, allowing their similarities to speak for themselves.

The Qadarīya: Good actions and the good come from God, but evil and evil deeds from themselves, so as not to attribute base actions and sin to God.[2]

The Damascene: "Of all the things that happen, the cause is said to be either God, or necessity, or fate, or nature, or chance, or accident . . . . Under which then of these categories are we to bring what happens through the agency of Man? . . . For it would not be right to ascribe to God actions that are sometimes base and unjust . . . . We are left then with this fact, that the man who acts and makes is himself the author of his own works, and is a creature endowed with free will."[1]

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[1] Al-Malaṭī: *Al-Tanbih*, pp. 126–135.

[2] Ibid. p. 129.

The Qadarīya: That God has made over to them completely and perfectly the power to act, no increase being needed; they are therefore able to believe or disbelieve; to eat and drink; to stand or sit, to sleep or awake; to do, in fact, anything they wish. They assert that men are capable of believing (or disbelieving), for if this were not so, they could not be punished for things they cannot do.[2]

The Damascene: "Of events, some are in our hands, others are not. Those then are in our hands which we are free to do or not to do at our will, that is all actions that are done voluntarily . . . , and in a word, all that are followed by blame or praise and depend on motive and law. Strictly all mental and deliberate acts are in our hands. Now deliberation is concerned with equal possibilities: and an 'equal possibility' is an action that is itself within our power and its opposite, and our mind makes choice of the alternatives, and this is the origin of action. The actions, therefore, that are in our hands are these equal possibilities: e.g. to be moved or not to be moved, to hasten or not to hasten, to long for unnecessaries or not to do so, to tell lies or not to tell lies, to give or not to give, to rejoice or not to rejoice as fits the occasion, and all such actions as imply virtue or vice in their performance, for we are free to do or not to do these at our pleasure . . . ."[3]

The Qadarīya: They deny that God creates the child of adultery or determines him, or wills him, or knows him.[4]

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[1] *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Book II, Chap. 25, pp. 39, 40.

[2] Al-Malaṭī: *Al-Tanbih*, p. 133.

[3] *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Book II, Chap. 26, p. 40.

[4] Al-Malaṭī: *Al-Tanbih*, p. 134.

The Damascene: " And the Saracen will ask, 'Who forms the embryo in the woman's womb?' This problem they put before us wishing to show that God causes evil. For if you reply, 'God forms the embryo', the Saracen will say to you, 'See, God co-operates with fornicators and adulterers'. Let the Christian reply, 'Nowhere do we find the Scripture saying that God creates or forms anything after the first seven days of the world's creation. For all visible creatures were created in the first seven days, and He commanded them to bear and to be born, saying, 'Increase and multiply and fill the earth' (Gen. 1: 18). And since man was alive and possessed living seed, he sowed the seed in his own wife. By this method man begat men, as the divine Scripture says: 'Adam begat Seth and Seth begat Enosh and Enosh begat Cain and Cain begat Melaleel' and so on. It did not say that God formed Seth or Enosh or anyone else ".[1]

The Damascene: " . . . For the earliest formation is called 'making' and not 'generation'. For 'making' is the original formation at God's hands, while 'generation' is the succession from each other . . . . "[2]

The Qadarites: " They assert that God has appointed for them their sustenance and how long they should live, so that whoever murders a man, precludes him from his appointed term of life and his appointed sustenance, to die before his time, so that his sustenance is left not having been fully exhausted."[3]

The Damascene: " Providence, then is the care that God takes over existing things. And again: Providence is the will of God through which all existing things receive their fitting issue . . . . For the same person must of necessity be creator of and provider for what exists: for it is not meet nor fitting that the creator of what exists and the provider should be separate persons. For in that case they would both assuredly be deficient, the one in creating, the other in providing. God, therefore, is both Creator and Provider, and His creative and preserving and providing power is simply His good will . . . . Now the works of Providence are partly according to the good will (of God) and partly according to permission. Works of good will include all those that are undeniably good . . . . Providence often permits the just man to encounter misfortune in order that He may reveal to others the virtue that lies concealed within him, as was the case with Job . . . . One man is forsaken for a season with a view to another's restoration ... Moreover, it is to be observed that the choice of what is to be done is in our own hands: but the final issue depends in the one case when our actions are good, on the co-operation of God, Who in His justice brings help according to His foreknowledge to such as choose the good with a right conscience and, in the other case when our actions are evil, on the desertion of God, Who again in His justice stands aloof in accordance with His foreknowledge."[1]

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[1] John of Damascus: *Disceptatio Christiani et Saraceni*, Ed. Migne, Vol. XCIV. p. 1591.

[2] *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Book II, Chap. 30, p. 43.

[3] Al-Malaṭī: *Al-Tanbīh*, p. 134.

An examination of certain key terms often serves to highlight the controversies which raged between the Muslim innovators and the orthodoxy they were opposing. Thus the dispute on free will turned on the use by the Mu'tazila of the verb *yukhalli* (to leave free) and its verbal noun *takhliya*[2] (permission), used in the sense of God leaving man free to act. These terms were employed in opposition to the orthodox *yaḥūlu bain*—'interference' or 'intervention'—in the sense of God interposing between a man and his actions.

It is noteworthy, in this discussion of terms, that the Damascene's term 'permission' is rendered in the Arabic translation of his works by *takhliya*, the very same word later used by the Mu'tazila in defence of their position.

Tafwīḍ is another key term used in the Arabic translation of the Damascene's works (discussed above in the Origins of Free Will: *Autoexousios* and *Tafwīḍ*). One of the Qadarī groups, believing in tafwīḍ—or the delegation by God to man of the power to act—was therefore known as the Mufawwiḍa.

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[1] *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Book II, Chap. 29, pp. 41, 42.

[2] Infra pp. 87, 88.

CHAPTER TWO

Qaḍā' and Qadar or God's Decrees

A. ORIGIN AND DERIVATION

In the search for the origins of the Qadarīya movement one is soon faced with the problem of the real meaning and derivation of the key terms: *Qaḍā'* and *Qadar*, which are invariably used to describe the doctrine in both speech and writing, standing for predestination or God's eternal decrees regarding human destiny. There are these inexplicables: Why are there two terms, and why are they used in juxtaposition? In what way, if any, are they related? And, finally, and most puzzling of all, how did these terms come to mean determinism since this is not the sense in which they are used in the Qur'ān, as we shall go on to show?

It has been generally accepted that *qaḍā* means 'deciding', 'commanding', 'judging' or 'discharging an obligation'; while *qaddara* means 'to measure', 'estimate' or 'assign specifically by measure'. Scholars dealing with the question have gone on to say that *qaḍā'* stands for the eternal, universal decision of Allah regarding the unfolding destiny of everything while *qadar* suggests the measuring out and application of God's decrees in individual cases. Dr. D. B. Macdonald, reviewing the various interpretations of the terms, concludes that " . . . the overwhelmingly accepted position makes *qaḍā'* the universal, general and eternal decree, and *qadar* the individual development or application of that in time ", basing himself on the Dictionary of Technical Terms (Part II, p. 1234).[1]

The explanation which has seemed to me most satisfactory is that the origin of the terms is a Syriac phrase *pusqono ho d^{e}ḥelqo*, or the synonymous *g^{e}ẓar dino d^{e}ḥelqo*, meaning the decree of fate. In some instances, the plural *ḥelqe* is used to mean the decree of the fates.

The two Arabic words *qaḍā'* and *qadar* are the exact equivalents of the Syriac terms, taken separately: *qaḍā'* or *pusqono* (or g^{e}zar dino) mean 'judgement', 'sentence' and thus 'decree', while *qadar* or *ḥelqo* mean a 'share', a 'thing measured', and thus the 'allotted fate'.

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[1] *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, pp. 199, 200.

The Syriac terms are found in the Syriac treatise on fate called the Book of the Laws of Countries, written by Bardesan,[1] or more correctly, by his disciple Philip,[2] at about the middle of the second century. *Pusqono ho d^{e}ḥelqo* is found on page 8 of the Syriac text ('decree of fate' in Cureton's translation, p. 11); the alternative *g^{e}zar dino* is found on page 13, line 3 of the Syriac (Cureton p. 15, line 18). The two words are used in juxtaposition in the phrase *ḥelqo u-pusqono*, found in the Syriac p. 12, line 23 (Cureton, p. 15, line 7: 'fate *and* decree'.) This is an exact equivalent of the Arabic phrase *qadar wa-qaḍā'*.

It appears then that Muslims went to the Qur'ān to find equivalents for the Syriac terms, which they found in the words *qaḍā'* and *qadar*. In the Syriac, the use of the words appears to have developed as follows: They were first used in construct to mean the " decrees, or sentence, of fate "—which makes the best sense of all. They were then used in juxtaposition the " decree and fate", and last of all, the second term of the original phrase was used alone. In Arabic, we have examples of the last two stages of development, namely when *qaḍā'* and *qadar* are juxtaposed and when *qadar* is used alone.

We therefore say that the two juxtaposed nouns with their different individual meanings only become clear when it is realized that they originally stood for Syriac equivalents used in construct.[3] Also that the original determinist sense of the Syriac was transferred to the Arabic terms which have no such sense in the Qur'ān.

The etymological derivation of the Arabic terms was perhaps overlooked because such Syriac Christian writers as the well-known Ibn 'Ibri did not use *pusqono* (or *gezar dino*) *deḥelqe* to mean determinism. The original Syriac phrase dropped out of usage together with the pagan idea it expressed.

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[1] W. Cureton: *Spicilegium Syriacum.*

[2] William Wright: *A short History of Syriac Literature*, pp. 28–30; J. Quaston: *Patrology*, Vol. I, p. 263.

[3] R. Payne Smith: *Thesaurus Syriacus*, p. 1294, explains the Syriac *g^{e}zar dino* and *ḥelqo* respectively by *qaḍā'* and *qadar*, without suggesting, however, that the two words are translated from the Syriac.

The Syriac *ḥelqo* is, in turn, a translation of the Greek *moira*, meaning originally a 'part', 'portion' or 'division' which gave its name to Moira, the Goddess of Fate. Bardesan uses *ḥelqe*, in the plural, in the phrase *gezar dino deḥelqe*, to mean the 'decrees of the fates', found in the Syriac text p. 13, line 3 (Cureton, p. 15, line 18). This is again the Greek Moirai: the three goddesses of fate: Clothe, Lachesis and Atropos. Other contexts in which *ḥelqe* is found in the sense of the Fates are the Acts of Sharbil,[1] in which this Christian martyr asks to be spared talk of gods, powers and fates (*ḥelqe*);[2] also in the *Hymns against Heretics* by the fourth century saint and poet, Ephraem Syrus.[3]

B. QAḌĀ' AND QADAR IN THE QUR'ĀN

A study of the use of *qaḍā'* and *qadar* in the Qur'ān reveals that they bear no reference to determinism and have nothing to do with preordained decisions regarding man's works or destiny. Muslim commentators and modern translators of the Qur'ān, under the influence of the Syriac *pusqono* and *ḥelqo*, gave these Qur'ānic terms a connotation which they only came to have in post-Qur'ānic times. The translators thus introduced destiny where there is no mention of it in the original text.

A glaring example is Q.25: 2 which Rodwell translates as: "All things hath he created, and decreeing hath decreed their destinies (qaddarahu taqdiran)." This is correctly translated by Professor Arberry as "He created all things and ordained it very exactly." The Mu'tazilī commentator al-Zamakhsharī says here: "God originated all things with an eye to their perfection to prepare them for their proper use." 'Umar b. Muḥ. al-Sakūnī, who sets out to expose al-Zamakhsharī's Mu'tazila heresies, counters by saying that al-Zamakhsharī fails to mention God's anterior qadar which is His eternal will.[1]

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[1] W. Cureton: *Ancient Syriac Documents*, English Text p. 50; Syriac p. 51.

[2] Terminology has changed very little over the centuries. A Beirut newspaper recently reporting a road accident in which twenty-three young people lost their lives says: "The fates (*al-aqdār*) have brought this calamity upon us."

[3] *Scriptores Syri*, Tomus 76, 77, Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers, Hymen contra Haereses, pp. 11, 12, and passim.

The same obsession with the idea of determinism is evident in Rodwell's translation of Q.87: 2, 3: "Who hath created (*khalaqa*) and balanced all things; who hath fixed their destinies (qaddara) and guideth them." *Qaddara*, standing in the same context as *khalaqa*, can mean no more than that God fashioned according to measure, as in Q.80: 19, which Rodwell translates correctly as: "He created him and fashioned him (*khalaqahu fa-qaddarahu*)."

These verses point to the quality of God's workmanship: He gave shape and form to His creation and circumscribed it; they carry no hint of predestination. The same sense is to be found in the Wisdom of Solomon 11: 17, 20 where, after mentioning God's all-powerful hand which created the world out of formless matter, the writer says: "But by measure and number and weight thou didst order all things".[2]

Determinism is again introduced by Rodwell into Q.8: 43 which he translates as: ". . . that God might accomplish the thing *destined* to be done." ('*destined*' is not in the Arabic text and is introduced by Rodwell in italics). Prof. Arberry's translation which is less predestinarian runs: "That God might determine a matter that was done." Al-Zamakhsharī rightly finds no mention of determinism in the text and comments as follows: God so arranged it that He might accomplish something He had to do to help His friends and vanquish His enemies. Al-Zamakhsharī's omission of all reference to determinism and his suggestion that God is under some obligation towards his creatures raises the ire of al-Sakūnī, who protests: This is rank heresy; there is nothing incumbent upon God which

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[1] Al-Sakūnī: *Kitāb al-tamyīz libayān ma fi tafsīr al-Zamakhsharī min al-i'tizāl.*

[2] Cf. Philo: Somn. ii, 29: "God and not the mind of man measures, weighs and numbers all things and circumscribes them with bounds and limits."

He must do. This thing (the course of the battle of Badr referred to in the text) had to happen in order to bring about what had been foreordained by the eternal *qadar*; His *qaḍā'* is inevitable (*lā budda*) and immutable (*lā tabdīl*).

If *qaḍā'* and *qadar* bear no reference to determinism in the Qur'ān, what then do they mean?

1. *Qaḍā'*: The verb qaḍā' in the Qur'ān, when used with God or man as subject, means 'to command', 'to legislate', 'to order', or 'to decide'. For instance Q.17: 24: "The Lord has ordained (*qaḍā*) you shall not serve any but Him." The same verb is used in Q.33: 36 where the Prophet is associated with God in legislation regarding adopted sons: "It is not for a believer, man or woman, to have any choice in their affairs, when God and the Apostle have ordained (*qaḍā*) a matter, and whoever disobeys God and His Apostle has erred with a palpable error." In Q.20: 75, the verb *qaḍā* is used with man alone as subject: "Doom (O Pharaoh) the doom thou wilt."

The verb *qaḍā* also means 'to finish', 'to accomplish', or 'to discharge an obligation' as in Q.62: 10: "And when the prayer is ended . . .". And again, as in Q.2: 196: "And when ye have finished (*qaḍaitum*) your holy rites ...."

2. *Qadar*. *Qaddara*, no more than *qaḍā* is used to convey any sense of determinism in the Qur'ān. In Q.34: 10, it occurs in the sense of 'making according to measure': ". . . Make coats of mail, and arrange (*qaddir*) its plates." If this is the correct sense, Rodwell surely must be wrong in translating Q.87: 3 as: "Who hath fixed their destinies (*qaddara*) and guideth them." As we have shown above, *qaddara* is used synonymously with *khalaqa* and *sawwa*, and can mean no more than 'to fashion according to measure', or 'to shape aright'.

Qaddara is also used to mean 'to ordain' or 'to plan' as in Q.74: 19; "May he be cursed! How he planned! (*qaddara*)" There is, however, a slight hint of destiny when *qaddara* is used in Q.15: 60 with reference to Lot's wife: "We have decreed (lit: ordained) that she shall be of those who linger." 'To ordain' does not necessarily mean 'to preordain'. This is, however, one of the very rare verses which could be interpreted in any predestinarian sense.

Qaddara can also mean 'to measure', or 'to estimate', as in Q.73: 20: " But God measureth (*yuqaddiru*) the night and the day." Arberry brings out this sense of the word in Q.76: 16: " There shall be passed round them vessels of silver and goblets of crystal, crystal of silver that they have measured very exactly (*qaddaruha taqdiran*)."

Rodwell and others have, I think, wrongly translated the word *qadar* as 'decree' in the two Qur'ānic phrases *'ala qadar* and *bi-qadar*, as in Q.20: 42: " Then comest thou (O Moses) hither by my decree." 'As planned' makes better sense. The same applies to Q.54: 49 which Rodwell renders as " All things have we created after a fixed decree." 'In measure' is possibly a better translation.

Like *qaḍā'*, *qaddara* is sometimes used in the sense of 'to legislate'. Here too Rodwell lapses into determinism as in Q.33: 38: " . . . For God's behest is a fixed decree (*qadran maqduran*)." Arberry's translation is equally questionable: " God's command is doom decreed." The context does not warrant a determinist interpretation as the question dealt with is legalization of marriage with the wife of an adopted son, which is a new ruling abrogating an earlier one.

The great weight of evidence from the text thus supports our contention that translators and commentators of the Qur'ān read into the terms *qaḍa'* and *qadar* a determinist sense, derived from a Syriac pagan source. How right then were the Mu'tazila in contending that *qaḍā'* and *qadar* in the Qur'ān conveyed no sense of God's foreordaining man's actions for good or ill. They rightly maintained that His *qadā'* like His *qadar* is His command to do right and eschew evil, as it is found in Q.17: 24: " Thy Lord hath ordained (qaḍā) that ye worship none but Him."[1]

The examination of some of the terms used to express the notion of determinism in Arabic reinforces our contention that the new ideas sprang from foreign sources, in this case a pagan idea, derived from Hellenized Syriac-speaking peoples only partially Christianized, was read into the terms *qaḍā'* and *qadar* which are native Arabic and Quar'ānic, and made to bear a denotation unwarranted by the text of the Qur'ān from which they were taken.

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[1] From a letter attributed to Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Der Islam, Vol. XXI, (1933).

PART II

THE MU'TAZILA OR THE PLACE OF REASON IN THEOLOGY

CHAPTER THREE

Jahm and the Mu'tazila

In tracing the relations between Greek Christianity and the early Muslim innovators, we come across a religious thinker who all the evidence suggests was an important intermediary in the movement of ideas. He is Jahm b. Ṣafwān, theologian and politician who, together with al-Ḥārith b. Suraij, led a revolt in Persia against the Umaiyads and was executed in 746.

We shall explore in this and the following chapters Jahm's role as a connecting link, attempting to demonstrate first, that the Mu'tazila were heavily indebted to him, if only at second hand, and secondly, that much of what he passed on to them he had himself learned from the Greek Church Fathers. So having first sat, as it were, at the feet of the Fathers, he initiated the Mu'tazila doctrine of God, to mention only his principal contribution.

Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā' is usually held to be the founder of the Mu'tazila. The Mu'tazila writer Ibn al-Murtaḍā attempts to trace the antecedents of the movement back to the Prophet himself and produces a *sanad* to this effect, claiming that Wāṣil's doctrine came from 'Abdallah b. Muhammad, who received it from his father, who in turn received it from the Prophet.[1] Al-Shahrastānī comes closer to the facts when he says that Zaid b. 'Ali, the grandson of al-Husain b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭaālib, learnt it from Wāṣil rather than the reverse.[2]

Wāṣil, in point of fact, was only the author of one of the five Mu'tazila principles, namely that of *al-manzila baina'l-manzilatain*—i.e. the principle that a Muslim committing a *kabīra* or grave sin is to be classed neither as an absolute believer nor as an absolute unbeliever, but in a class between the two.[1] This principle lies at the origin of the name of the movement, a name which has been widely misinterpreted, as is well known.

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[1] Ibn al-Murtaḍā: *Al-Munya* p. 5.

[2] Al-Shahrastānī: *Al-Milal*, p. 17.

The literature on the subject provides different and contradictory versions of the origins of the name 'Mu'tazilī' which was denied to Jahm. Al-Shahrastānī tells us that the name originated when someone put the following case to Ḥasan al-Baṣrī: " People have appeared among us declaring that Muslims who commit grave sins are unbelievers who thereby put themselves outside the community. These are the Khawārij. Another group maintains that disobedience does no harm where there is faith, just as without faith obedience is of no avail. These are the Murji'a. What is your ruling?"

Al-Shahrastānī goes on to say that before Ḥasan was able to reply, Wāṣil interjected that in his opinion a person guilty of a grave sin was neither an absolute believer nor an absolute unbeliever, but in an intermediate class by himself. Wāṣil then rose and moved to another pillar in the temple repeating his view. Ḥasan then said: 'Wāṣil has left us (*i'tazala 'anna*).' He and his colleagues were thus called Mu'tazila.[2] Dr. Tritton's verdict is that " the story is unconvincing."[3]

A variant is provided by Ibn Qutaiba who says that it was 'Amr b. 'Ubaid and not Wāṣil who disagreed with al-Ḥasan and left the assembly.[4] Al-Maqrīzī, on the other hand, says that the difference with al-Ḥasan which made several teachers go their own way concerned not just one but several principles. He gives us two other variants: first, that the split took place when 'Amr parted company with Qatāda, and secondly that it was 'Amr who left al-Ḥasan's circle.[5]

Al-Malaṭī gives us a completely different story: he relates that when Ḥasan b. 'Ali handed over the Caliphate to Mu‘āwiya and swore allegiance to him, a group of ‘Ali’s followers separated itself from both Ḥasan and Mu‘āwiya and said: “ Let us devote ourselves to study and worship.” They were therefore known as Mu‘tazila.[1]

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[1] Ibn al-Murtaḍā: *Al-Munya*, p. 3.

[2] Al-Shahrastānī: *Al-Milal*, p. 33.

[3] A. S. Tritton: *Muslim Theology*, p. 60.

[4] Ibn Qutaiba: *Al-Ma'ārif*, p. 243.

[5] Al-Maqrīzī: *Al-Khiṭaṭ*, Vol. iv, pp. 164, 165.

While there is historical support for the story of the schism which took place in Ḥasan’s circle, the interpretation of the name deduced from that incident is wrong. Professor Nallino was the first to point out that the name ‘Mu‘tazila’ is derived from the fact that Wāṣil withdrew not just from the circle but from the two extreme views mentioned above. He took up the position that the sinner lay in an intermediate state—*al-manzila baina’l-manzilatain*.

If Wāṣil was not the author of the other four Mu‘tazila principles, including the key doctrine of *tawḥīd*, or the unity of God, with whom then did they originate? Our contention is that Jahm rather than Wāṣil can rightly claim authorship of the Mu‘tazili doctrine of *tawḥīd*, one of the two most important planks in their platform.

Ibn Ḥanbal, who had no reason for partiality in fathering the heretical doctrine on either Jahm or Wāṣil, ascribes *tawḥīd* to Jahm by saying that he was principally concerned with the doctrine of God and that he had founded the religion of the Jahmiya[2] وضع دين الجهميّة, by which name Ibn Ḥanbal designates the whole Mu‘tazila movement. That the target of Ibn Ḥanbal’s attacks was not Jahm alone or his followers but the whole body of heretical doctrines known as Mu‘tazilism is apparent from a reading of his polemical tract, al-Radd, a translation of which is given in Chapter 7.

In this work, Ibn Ḥanbal says that Jahm based his teaching on the following three verses from the Qur’ān: “Nought is there like Him,” (Q.42: 9); “ He is God in the heavens and on earth,” (Q.6: 3); and “ No vision reaches Him.” (Q.6: 103).[3] When we turn to a pure Mu‘tazila work such as the *Intiṣār*, we find these identical verses quoted in support of the Mu'tazila position.

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[1] Al-Malaṭī: *Al-Tanbih*, p. 41 (Cairo Ed.).
[2] Ibn Ḥanbal: *Al-Radd*, p. 3b.
[3] Ibid, p. 3b.

Two other verses used by Jahm to prop up his system, as we learn from Ibn Ḥanbal, were used by the Mu'tazila in defence of their teaching. These are " He is the first and the last," (Q.57: 3)[1] and " Three persons speak not privately together but He is their fourth; nor five, but He is their sixth; nor fewer nor more, but wherever they may be He is with them," (Q.58: 8).[2]

Quite apart from the similarity of the Qur'ānic basis of the Jahmiya and the Mu'tazila, we have in a late second century group of theologians, called by al-Shahrastānī 'moderate Mu'tazilīs' معتزلة متوسطين,[3] a connecting link between the two. These are Ḍirār b. 'Amr, Ḥusain b. Muh. al-Najjār and Bishr al-Marīsī (+833), who are said to represent " a reformed and modified Jahmiya."[4] Ḍirār constitutes a direct link between Jahm and the Mu'tazila in that Jahm was his Imām, while he in turn taught Abū Hudhail, who eventually replaced him as head of the Basra assembly.[5] Abū Hudhail, as we know from al-Shahrastānī, was the " shaikh of the Mu'tazila, its foremost member and the one who traced its path and defended it."[6]

Having established this connection, we cannot be wrong in claiming that the Mu'tazila were essentially reformed Jahmīs, who while rejecting Jahm's determinism, they included in their theological system important Jahmiya elements.

Their indebtedness to Jahm was not confined to *tawḥīd*. They can be shown to have adopted many other ideas, not all corollaries of *tawḥīd*. They rejected, for instance, much of the orthodox Muslim eschatology and the doctrine of an uncreated Qur'ān. They also taught that God could not be perceived by the senses but by the heart, and that God, therefore, could not and would not be seen. They also adopted Jahm's system of *ta'wīl*, the notion that the anthropomorphism of the Qur'ān must be interpreted allegorically.

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[1] Ibid. p. 19a.

[2] Ibid. p. 16b.

[3] Al-Shahrastānī: *Al-Milal*, p. 19.

[4] *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 431.

[5] Al-Malaṭī: *Al-Tanbīh*, p. 43.

[6] Al-Shahrastānī: *Al-Milal*, p. 34.

A modern Arab writer maintains that Abū Hudhail was influenced by Jahm in holding that all action will cease in the next world. Jahm's belief was that heaven and hell will come to an end and God will again be alone as He was before creation, since it is written " He is the first and the last."[1]

In addition to the above links between Jahm and the Mu'tazila, there is further proof of their close connection in the fact that Jahm is on record as preaching Mu'tazila doctrines. Both Ibn al-Murtaḍā[2] and Ibn Ḥanbal[3] relate how Jahm, being one of the preachers sent out by Wāṣil, was on one occasion worsted in debate by the Sumaniya, who are variously thought of as Indian Buddhists or Ḥarrānian Hellenized pagans. The Mu'tazila account of the incident, as recounted by Ibn al-Murtaḍā, is that Wāṣil came to Jahm's aid and supplied the answer which he had failed to find. This is obviously tendentious, having for its object the glorification of Wāṣil at Jahm's expense. Ibn Ḥanbal seems the more trustworthy when he tells us that Christians supplied Jahm with the required answer. There is no denying, however, that there was much coming and going between Jahm and the Mu'tazila.

Having established the extent of the Mu'tazila debt to Jahm and the connections between them, how are we to explain his repudiation by them and their refusal even to admit that he was a Mu'tazilī and only grudgingly granting him the title of *muwaḥḥid*?[4] This, we think, can only be explained by their search for respectability. Jahm, who to Ibn Ḥanbal was the enemy of God, could not be acknowledged as their Imām. Jahm had drawn the orthodox fire:

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[1] Zuhdi Hasan Jarallah: *Al-Mu'tazila*, p. 118, 119.

[2] Ibn al-Murtaḍā: *Al-Munya*, pp. 19, 21.

[3] Ibn Ḥanbal: *Al-Radd*, p. 3a.

[4] Al-Khaiyāt: *Al-Intiṣār*, p. 126

the Jahmiya had been singled out for assignment to perdition in the earliest Muslim creed.[1] The Mu'tazila repudiation of Jahm is not, therefore, surprising, nor are their efforts to put Wāṣil in the founder's place which Jahm should have occupied.

In conclusion, we propose to quote some significant admissions by modern scholars which go far to support our view that Jahm was the real founder of much Mu'tazila teaching. Dr. Pines says: " We have proof for the surmise that in the relationships between the two (i.e. Jahm and the Mu'tazilīs), the Mu'tazilīs were not the only giving party."[2] "Jahm's theology," says H. S. Nyberg, "left distinct traces on that of the Mu'tazila; the doctrine of a created Qur'ān which was later to become a fundamental Mu'tazila thesis, was probably formulated by Jahm, and in the doctrine of the Divine attributes, there are coincidences on both sides which cannot be accidental."[3]

" It may be asked," says A. J. Wensinck, " whether the points which he (Jahm) has in common with the Mu'tazilites are due to the influence of this sect, or are a consequence of his own system."[4] And lastly, a word from Montgomery Watt: " There were also the mysterious Jahmiya, constituting some or all the *muwaḥḥida*, who influenced Abū Hudhail, especially in his views on *tawḥīd*."[5]

Jahm's doctrine of *jabr*—that is that men act under compulsion—is a problem not directly connected with our subject. The suggestion that we can trace " an Islamic motive " behind Jahm's teaching on *jabr*[6] is doubtful. Unlike Jahm's other views, his doctrine of *jabr* is unsupported by any proof-texts from the Qur'ān from which may legitimately be deduced that it was inspired by foreign influence, possibly the Stoic conception of fate.

We may therefore conclude that Jahm's *jabr* was no more Islamic in inspiration than was the doctrine of

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[1] Fiqh Akbar I.

[2] S. Pines: *Beiträge sur islamischen Atomenlehre*, p. 133.

[3] H. S. Nyberg: *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 42.

[4] A. J. Wensinck: *Muslim Creed*, p. 120.

[5] W. Montgomery Watt: *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, p. 62.

[6] Ibid, p. 102.

tawḥid, or God's unity, since a good old-fashioned Muslim like Ibn Ḥanbal could see in it nothing but atheism. We shall go on to show in the following chapter that Jahm's transcendental deity, his allegorization, as well as his intellectualism generally, were Greek in spirit rather than Arabic and Islamic.

CHAPTER FOUR

Jahm and the Church Fathers

We attempted to establish in the preceding chapter the close affinity and interaction between Jahm and the Mu'tazila. Here, we intend to take the argument a step further by pointing out the striking similarity between Jahm's teaching and that of the Church Fathers. This second stage serves the two purposes of confirming Jahm as an intermediary and of establishing the origin of the ideas which he passed on to the Mu'tazila.

Examining Jahm's methods and doctrines, as outlined by Ibn Ḥanbal in his polemical work al-Radd, we are struck by their similarity with Alexandrian Christianity as found in the Church Fathers. It is noteworthy that we find in Jahm all the key elements of Greek Christianity, namely the knowledge of God by reason and demonstration, allegorization, the notion of a transcendent deity and all that follows from it. These elements as well as Jahm's views on the Qur'ān and the last things, all of which seem to be of foreign inspiration, were the butt of Ibn Ḥanbal's attack.

We now propose to deal with these elements in turn and present in juxtaposition representative quotations from Ibn Ḥanbal and the Church Fathers.

A. KNOWLEDGE OF GOD BY REASON AND DEMONSTRATION

Ibn Ḥanbal's al-Radd begins with the story of how the Sumaniya[1] silenced Jahm by proving to him that since he could not apprehend God through his senses he had no way of knowing that He was God. This put Jahm off prayer for forty days until he discovered an argument used by Christians. It ran as follows: If the Sumaniya admitted, as they must, that they were possessed of a spirit which could not be perceived by the senses, they could not therefore deny a knowledge of God who, like the spirit, could not be seen or localized.[1]

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[1] Clement writes about the Sumaniya: "The Indian gymnosophists are also in the number. And of these there are two classes, some of them called Sarmanae (or Samanaei) and others Brahmins. And those of the Sarmanae who are called Hylobii neither inhabit cities nor have roofs over them, but are clothed in the bark of trees, feed on nuts, and drink water in their hands." *Stromata* I.

In Ibn Murtaḍā's version of the same story,[2] the conclusion is drawn that knowledge is acquired both through the evidence of the senses and by deductive proof. The story, which may well be apocryphal served the Mu'tazila as an apology for 'intellectualism' in religion. They were convinced that there was no other way of answering the Sumaniya who argued like Stoic materialists.[3] The story shows that Jahm drew his answer from philosophic Christianity in which the knowledge of God is arrived at by demonstration rather than revelation. This was a dialectical approach which was anathema to Ibn Ḥanbal.

The incident is reminiscent of the passage in Plato's Sophist " where arguing with those 'who drag everything down to the corporeal' (σῶμα), the Eleatic stranger would fain prove to them the existence of something incorporeal, as follows. 'They admit the existence of an animate body. Is soul then something existent (οὐσία)? Yes. And the qualities of soul, as justice and wisdom—are they visible and tangible? No. Do they then exist? They are in a dilemma.' "[4]

In later centuries, when the mere trickle of Greek ideas became a flood more and more emphasis was placed on intellection as against sense perception. Thus Ibn Miskawaih (+1030) says " To understand divine things which are furthest away from us, we must first be trained in the knowledge of physical things and proceed thence to the highest reach of philosophy. For the nature of reality is attained in two ways, a higher and a lower; the lower is through the five animal senses, the higher is by means of man's intellect.[5]

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[1] *Al-Radd*, pp. 2b, 3a.

[2] Ibn Murtaḍā: *Al-Munya*, p. 21.

[3] Origen: *Contra Celsum*, 7: 37.

[4] Plato: Sophist, 246 C seq. quoted from the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. 25, p. 943.

[5] Ibn Miskawaih *Al-Fawz al-Aṣghar*, pp. 9, 10.

Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī (+1009) says "The evidence of the mind is superior to the evidence of the senses because the intellect is lord and sense perception is a subordinate and the master's evidence is preferable."[1]

This intellectualism in matters relating to the knowledge of God and the place given to reason are distinctive of the Church Fathers.

A representative statement of the view of the Fathers can be found in Origen's reply to Celsus on the respective roles of mind and the senses in our knowledge of God. Celsus had misrepresented the Christians as saying "How can we know God unless by the perception of the senses? For how otherwise than through the senses are we able to gain any knowledge?" Celsus then tells the Christians: "If instead of exercising the senses you look upwards with the soul; if turning away the eye of the body you open the eye of the mind, thus and thus only will you be able to see God." But concludes Celsus, that is too much to ask from "such a spiritless and carnal race."

Origen's reply is twofold. He first points out the absurdity of attributing to the unlearned Christians the Stoic doctrine that all knowledge is acquired through the senses. He then proceeds to explain that Christian philosophers "begin with the use of the senses upon sensible objects, in order to go on from them to a knowledge of the nature of things intellectual, yet their knowledge must not stop short with the objects of sense . . . ." "Since we hold," Origen continues, "that the great God is in essence simple, invisible and incorporeal, Himself pure intelligence, or something transcending intelligence and existence, we can never say that God is apprehended by any other means than through intelligence which is formed in His image . . . ."[2]

To Origen God is mind, "the mind and source from which all intellectual nature or mind takes its beginning." The sense of mind is of all the senses much the best. To assert that mind is an accident or a bodily effect is to disparage that better substance within us; it is to wrong God Himself to think that He can be understood by means of a body. Men who hold these views are unwilling to understand that the mind bears a certain relationship to God of whom the mind itself is an intellectual image and if purified and separated from matter, may be a means of grasping something of the nature of the Divine.[1]

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[1] Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīdī: *Thalātha Rasā'il*, p. 61.

[2] Origen: *Contra Celsum*, VIII, 36–39.

B. INTERPRETATION AND ALLEGORIZATION IN ISLAM

A second feature or rather method of Greek Christian theology adopted by Jahm is the figurative interpretation of Scripture. Jahm interpreted allegorically anthropomorphic passages in the Qur'ān in the same way as Philo and the Fathers interpreted the Bible and the Greeks Homer. The question of the use of allegory became a matter of dispute because it affected the doctrine of the nature of God, a central issue in Islam. What gave rise to the dispute was that while the Qur'ān strongly emphasized the absolute uniqueness of God, it yet described Him in anthropomorphic terms, ascribing to Him eyes, hands and a face, and portraying Him as speaking and sitting on a throne.

The two rival views of the nature of God were *tashbīh*, or comparing God to man and *ta'ṭīl*, or divesting God of all attributes; *tā'wīl*, or the allegorical interpretation of the anthropomorphic expressions in the Qur'ān, was brought in to explain away what was offensive in *tashbīh*.

A verse in the Qur'ān which came to play a part in the controversy was Q.3: 5: "He it is who hath sent down to thee 'the Book'. Some of its signs (or verses) are of themselves perspicuous (*muḥkamāt*);—these are the basis of the Book—and others are figurative (*mutashābihāt*). But they whose hearts are given to err, follow its figures, craving discord, craving an interpretation; yet none knoweth its interpretation but God. And the stable in knowledge say, 'We believe in it: it is all from our Lord'."

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[1] *De Principiis*, I. 1: 6, 7.

Al-Suyūṭī devotes the forty-third theme of his *Itqān* to a discussion of the two terms *muḥkam* and *mutashābih* with reference to the doctrine of God. He distinguishes between the *salaf* and the *khalaf*, that is between the early traditionists and their successors. The former held that the figurative, or more literally, the ambiguous verses in the Qur'ān relating to God's attributes must be believed. Such *ṣifāt* as God's face, eye, hand, right hand and His sitting on the throne are not to be interpreted; the question of their meaning must be left to God yet, withal, guarding God's remoteness and apartness—*tanzīh*. Al-Suyūṭī then proceeds to quote Mālik Ibn Anas (+795) to the effect that we do not know how God sat on the throne but know that He did so. This we must believe. To discuss it is innovation, or *bid'ah*. Al-Lālakā'ī (+ 1027), quoting Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan, says that all the doctors are agreed that we must believe the *ṣifāt* without interpretation and without *tashbīh*.

The *Khalaf*, on the other hand, held that God's attributes must be interpreted in a way fitting with His Majesty. We should like to interpose here that this was the maxim which underlay the use of allegory not only by the Muslims but also by the Greeks and the Church Fathers. It was the principle which lay behind the use of the method and its ultimate justification. Al-Suyūṭī goes on to say that the difference between the two points of view centred on the question of whether it was possible for the Qur'ān to contain anything obscure, or whether it was only obscure to some but known to the " stable in knowledge." The verse quoted above, Q.3: 5 may be used to support either view according to how it is punctuated. If the words 'And the stable in knowledge' begin a new sentence, the *mutashābihāt* would then be known to God alone and to no one else. But if the phrase 'And the stable in knowledge' follows on from the preceding words, then the *mutashābihāt* would be known to an elite as well.

Ibn Ḥanbal's accusation against Jahm was that he made use of the *mutashābihāt* or ambiguous verses to bolster up his position in regard to the doctrine of God and the nature of the Qur'ān. Thus we have Ibn Ḥanbal's son 'Abdullah telling us in the opening paragraph of Al-Radd that his father had written the pamphlet in refutation of the Jahmiya's misinterpretation of the ambiguous passages. (Al-Radd, p. 2a).

With respect to the doctrine of God, Ibn Ḥanbal says that Jahm built his system on three ambiguous verses: "Nought is like Him," (Q.42: 9), "He is God in the heavens and on earth," (Q.6: 3) and "No vision reaches Him," (Q.6: 103) (p. 3b). He is further accused by Ibn Ḥanbal of making use of ambiguous verses in support of his heretical view that the Qur'ān was created. This he did by alleging that *ja'ala*, 'to make', was synonymous with *khalaqa*, 'to create', making use of the ambiguous verse "We have made it an Arabic Koran," (Q.43: 2) (p. 4b). He similarly adduced the word *muḥdath*,[1] another anbiguous term, to mislead by asserting that the Qur'ān was originated, making use of the verse "Every fresh warning (*dhikr muḥdath*) that cometh to them from their Lord," (Q.21: 2) (p. 10b).

Ibn Ḥanbal, however, is not consistent, for he himself reverts to interpretation in a number of verses while Jahm appears to keep to the literal sense, their respective roles thus being reversed.

The verse "He is God in the heavens and on the earth" (Q.6: 3) means, says Ibn Ḥanbal, that He is the God of all that are in heaven and all that are on earth; God is on His throne: it would not be to His glory for Him to be in Jahmīs, or in swine or in any other unclean place (pp. 15b, 16a). In "Three persons speak not privately together, but He is their fourth" (Q.58: 8), God's presence, says Ibn Ḥanbal, means that He knows everything for which He will punish and reward. (pp. 16b, 17a). I am with you both" (Q.20: 48) is interpreted to mean not God's presence but His help (p. 14b). Lastly, "God is the light of the heavens and of the earth," (Q.24: 35) means that He has light. For, Ibn Ḥanbal asks, if God is in every place and is Himself light as Jahm asserts, why is it that a candle will light up a room while He does not? (p. 20a).

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[1] *Muḥdath*: originated, or newly made.

C. ALLEGORIZATION AMONG THE GREEKS AND THE CHURCH FATHERS

This method of figurative interpretation or allegorization made use of by Jahm derives from the Greeks who devised it to reconcile the older religion of the Homeric world with the new ideas which clashed with it. This resort to allegory was part of the intellectual movement which flowered in the fifth century B.C. Heraclitus was one of the first writers to give it a detailed expression; his aim was to reinterpret Homer and thus vindicate him from the charge of impiety.[1]

The Hebrew scriptures, which were regarded as God-inspired, seemed to contain ideas inconsistent with morality, so they too needed to be allegorized. Edwin Hatch says: " To it (the Hebrew Scripture), no less than to Homer, was applicable the theory that the words were the veils of a hidden meaning. The application fulfilled a double purpose: it enabled educated Jews on the one hand to reconcile their own adoption of Greek philosophy with their continued adhesion to their ancestral religion, and on the other hand to show to the educated Greeks with whom they associated, and whom they frequently tried to convert, that their literature was neither barbarous, nor unmeaning, nor immoral."[2] Allegorical interpretation was later adopted by Philo whose task was facilitated by the existence of just such allegorical interpretation in Judaism.[3]

The Church Fathers resorted to allegorization for much the same reason: to bring the Old Testament into line with their new and more exalted idea of God. Edwin Hatch sums up the position as follows: " The reasons given for believing that the Old Testament had an allegorical meaning were precisely analogous to those which had been given in respect of Homer. There were many things in the Old Testament which jarred upon the nascent Christian consciousness. 'Far be it from us to believe,' says the writer of the Clementine Homilies, 'that the Master of the universe, the Maker of heaven and earth, 'tempts' men as though He did not know—for who then does foreknow? And if He 'repents,' who is perfect in thought and firm in judgement? and if He 'hardens' men's hearts, who makes them wise? And if He 'blinds' them, who makes them see? and if He desires 'a fruitful hill' whose then are all things? and if He wants the savour of sacrifices, who is it that needeth nothing? and if He delights in lamps, who is it that set the stars in heaven?' "[1]

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[1] E. Hatch: Influences of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church, p. 62.

[2] Ibid, p. 66.

[3] H. A. Wolfson: *Philo*, I, 132, 3.

Charles Bigg explains that lying at the root of allegorism is the great Platonic maxim, that " nothing is to be believed which is unworthy of God."[2] This is what Clement stresses: " The liars then in reality are . . . (those) who do not quote or deliver the Scriptures in a manner worthy of God and the Lord."[3] " But the truth is not found by changing the meanings . . . but in the consideration of what perfectly belongs to and becomes the Sovereign God."[4]

We thus see that the Church Fathers and the Muslim *khalaf* meet in their common application of the principle that the Divine attributes must be interpreted in a way fitting with God's majesty, and that Jahm and the Church Fathers, both heirs of Greek thought, use the same method for the same reason.

D. A TRANSCENDENT DEITY

Ibn Ḥanbal opens his attack on Jahm rebutting what was Jahm's main concern namely his doctrine of God. We shall go on to show that Jahm's God, derived as we believe through the media of the Church Fathers, was closer to the Greek Absolute than to the God of the Qur'ān.

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[1] E. Hatch: *Influences of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*, p. 71, quoting *Clementine Homilies*, 2. 43, 44.

[2] Charles Bigg: *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, p. 51, n.2.

[3] Clement: *Stromata*, 6: 15.

[4] Ibid, 7: 16.

(*a*) *God Unknowable and Nameless*:

Ibn Ḥanbal attacks Jahm for holding that God, like His attribute, was unknown (*majhūl*) and was nameless until He created a name for Himself: 'Allah' in the Qur'ān was a created name. (pp. 4a; 18b). The same views are attributed to Ḍirār and the Ḍirāriya: al-Rāzī says that Ḍirār belonged to the *Mutakallimīn* who believed, as did the Greek philosophers, that God's true essence was unknown. Al-Shahrastānī attributes to the Ḍirāriya the view that God's essence (*mahiya*) was only known to Himself.[1]

To Ibn Ḥanbal, it was sheer atheism to assert that God was unknown (p. 4a); it was no better to say that 'Allah' was a created name. "'Allah' is Allah; 'Allah' is not a name; all things are names except Allah." (p. 18b).

This transcendentalism which is a bare statement of fact as far as Jahm is concerned, is in the Church Fathers an element in a fully developed theological system as may be seen from the quotations which follow.

Justin says: "But to the Father of all, who is unbegotten, there is no name given. For by whatever name He be called, He has as His elder the person who gives Him the name. But these words, Father and God and Creator and Master, are not names, but appellations derived from His good deeds and functions . . . . The appellation 'God' is not a name but an opinion implanted in the nature of men of a thing that can hardly be explained."[2]

Clement writes: "The discourse respecting God is most difficult to handle. For since the first principle of everything is difficult to find out, the absolutely first and oldest principle, which is the cause of all other things, being and having been, is difficult to exhibit. For how can that be expressed which is neither genus, nor difference, nor species, nor individual, nor number: nay more, is neither an event, nor that to which an event happens?"[1]

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[1] Al-Rāzī: *al-Muḥassal*, p. 136; al-Shahrastānī: *al-Milal*, p. 63.

[2] Justin: *Second Apology*, Chap. 6, p. 190.

"No one can rightly express Him wholly. For on account of His greatness He is ranked as the All, and is the Father of the universe. Nor are any parts to be predicted of Him. For the one is indivisible; wherefore also it is infinite, not considered with reference to its being without dimensions, and not having a limit. And therefore it is without form and name. And if we name it, we do not do so properly, terming it either the One, or the Good, or Mind, or Absolute Being, or Father, or God, or Creator, or Lord. We speak not as supplying His name; but for want, we use good names, in order that the mind may have these as points of support, so as not to err in any other respects. For each one by itself does not express God; but all together are indicative of the power of the Omnipotent. For predicates are expressed either from what belongs to things themselves, or from their mutual relation. But none of these are admissible in reference to God."[2]

John of Damascus writes: "It is plain, then, that there is a God. But what He is in His essence and nature is absolutely incomprehensible and unknowable .... It is impossible to explain what He is in His essence, and it befits us the rather to hold discourse about His absolute separation from all things. For He does not belong to the class of existing things: not that He has not existence, but that He is above all existing things, nay even above existence itself.... God then is infinite and incomprehensible, and all that is comprehensible about Him is His infinity and incomprehensibility."[3]

"The Deity being incomprehensible is also assuredly nameless. Therefore since we know not His essence, let us not seek for a name for His essence. For names are explanations of actual things. But God, who is good and brought us out of nothing into being that we might share in His goodness, and who gave us the faculty of knowledge, not only did not even grant us the knowledge of His essence. For it is impossible for nature to understand fully the supernatural . . . Inasmuch, then, as He is incomprehensible, He is also unnameable. But inasmuch as He is the cause of all and contains in Himself the reasons and causes of all that is, He receives names drawn from all that is, even from opposites . . . and inasmuch as He is the cause of all, He receives names from all His effects."[1]

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[1] Clement: *Stromata* V, Chap. 12, pp. 463, 464.

[2] Clement: *Stromata* V, Chap. 12, pp. 463, 464.

[3] John of Damascus: *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Book I, Chap. 4, pp. 3, 4.

(*b*) *God without Parts, Passions or Qualities*

The denial of anthropomorphism and anthropopathism is another issue in which Jahm is at one with the Fathers and diverges from Ibn Ḥanbal's orthodoxy.

The *Jahmiya*: (in a dispute with Ibn Ḥanbal) " If you say, 'Allah (was) and His light, Allah and His power, Allah and His might', you are speaking like the Christians, since you assert that Allah was ever existing and (so did) His light and His power . . . You will never be unitarians (*muwaḥḥida*) until you say, 'There was Allah and nothing else'." (pp. 15a, 15b).

Ibn Hanbal replies: " By saying that Allah was ever existing in all His qualities, are we not truly describing the One God in all His qualities?" He then presents them with the analogy of the palm-tree. " Is it not made up of stump, stem, fibre, foliage, leaves and pith, and for all its attributes has it not one name?" (p. 15b).

" And again, Allah referring to an infidel called Al-Walīd b. Al-Walīd b. Al-Mughīra Al-Makhzūmī, says 'Leave me to deal with him whom I have created, one (*waḥid*), (Q.74: 11). The one so named had eyes, ears, a tongue, lips, hands, feet and many members, and is yet named '*waḥid*', all his qualities notwithstanding. Likewise, Allah, who is to be compared to what is loftiest, is with all His qualities, one God." (p. 15b).

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[1] John of Damascus: *De Fid*ᵉ *Orthodoxa*, Book I, Chap. 12 p. 14

Jahm, when asked to explain the text "Nought is like Him" (Q.42: 9) replied: ". . . He is not qualifiable, neither is He known by any attribute or act; He has no limit or end; mind cannot apprehend Him: He is all face, all light, all power, without being two separate things; in Him is neither upper nor lower, no directions and no sides, no right and no left; He is neither heavy nor light; no light has He nor body; nor is He passible. Whenever you think that He is something you know, He is other than that." (p. 3b, 4a).

Clement's position is identical: "We lay hold of the way of cleansing by confession and then the vision by analysis, pressing on by analysis to the basis of thought, making a beginning from the things which underlie vision. We take away from physical body its natural qualities, stripping off the dimension of depth, then that of breadth, and after these that of length. For the point which is left is unity, as it were, with position, and if we remove position from it, unity is perceived. If then, after removing all that belongs to physical bodies, and the things that are called bodiless, we cast ourselves into the vastness of Christ, and from there we go forward through holiness into the void; if we do these things we shall reach in some way the perception of the Almighty, knowing not what He is, but what He is not. But shape and movement, or standing still, or throne or place, or right hand or left hand, are in no way whatever to be thought of as belonging to the Father of all things, even if these things are written. But what each of these means will be shown in its proper place. The first cause, then, is not in any place, but above place, and time, and name, and thought."[1]

The views of *John of Damascus* are no different: "The Deity is simple and uncompound. But that which is composed of many and different elements is compound. If, then, we should speak of the qualities of being uncreated and without beginning and incorporeal and immortal and everlasting and good and creative and so forth as essential differences in the case of God, that which is composed of so many qualities will not be simple but must be compound. But this is impious in the extreme. Each then of the affirmations about God should be thought of as signifying not what He is in essence, but either something that it is impossible to make plain, or some relation to some of those things which are contrasts or some of those things that follow the nature, or an energy."[1]

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[1] Clement: *Stromata* V, Chap. 11: quoted from E. F. Osborn: *The Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria*, pp. 26, 27.

(*c*) *God is not Spatial*

An important element in the debate on the doctrine of God between Jahm and Ibn Ḥanbal was the question of whether God was spatial, or more precisely, whether He was seated on the throne. Both positions are outlined clearly in Bab XII of al-Radd (pp. 15b f.). Jahm's view was that " God is under the seven earths as He is on the throne; He is in heaven, on earth and in every place; there is no place where He is not, nor is He in one place to the exclusion of any other." (p. 16a). Another statement of Jahm's position found later in the argument declares that " He is in everything, neither contiguous nor separated." (p. 17b) (For Ibn Ḥanbal's refutation of Jahm's doctrine, we refer the reader to the translation of his work in chapter 7.)

It is no surprise to find these views propounded much earlier by Clement and John of Damascus.

Clement: " For the power of God is always present, in contact with us, in the exercise of inspection, of benefice, or instruction. Whence Moses, persuaded that God is not to be known by human wisdom said, 'Show me thy glory'; (Exodus 33: 18) and into the thick darkness where God's voice was pressed to enter, that is, into the inaccessible and invisible ideas respecting Existence. For God is not darkness or in place, but above both space and time, and qualities of objects. Wherefore neither is He at any time in a part, either as containing or as contained, either by limitation or by section. 'For what house will ye build to Me!' says the Lord (Isaiah 66: 1). Nay, He has not even built one for Himself, since He cannot be contained. And though heaven be called His throne, not even thus is He contained, but He rests delighted in the creation."[1]

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[1] John of Damascus: *De Fide Orthodoxa* I, Chap. 9, p. 12.

John of Damascus: " God, then, being immaterial and uncircumscribed, has no place. For He is His own place, filling all things and being above all things, and Himself maintaining all things. Yet we speak of God having place and the place of God where His energy becomes manifest. For He penetrates everything without mixing with it and imparts to all His energy in proportion to the fitness and receptive power of each: and by this I mean, a purity both natural and voluntary . . . Wherefore by the place of God is meant that which has a greater share in His energy and grace." The Damascene goes on to say that heaven is said to be God's throne because of the angels who do His will and glorify Him; the earth is His footstool because of Christ who dwelt in the flesh among men; the Church, too, is spoken of as God's place because it is a consecrated place where we commune with Him. " But it must be understood that the Deity is indivisible being everywhere wholly in His entirety and not divided up part by part like that which has body, but wholly in everything and wholly above everything."[2]

(*d*) *God's Speech and Vision*

Concerning God's speech, Ibn Ḥanbal quotes Jahm as saying: " God has never spoken and does not speak;" (p. 3b), again " Speech was through an organ and organs were taboo as far as Allah was concerned; (p. 4a), and yet again " Allah has not spoken and does not speak. He has made something which enunciates for Him and created a voice to be heard. Speech requires an interior, a tongue and lips." (p. 14a).

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[1] Clement: *Stromata* II, Chap. 2, p. 348.
John of Damascus: *De Fide Orthodoxa* I. 13, p. 15.

It is noteworthy that Najjār, a link between Jahm and the Mu'tazila,[1] says that when we assert that God does not cease speaking, all we mean is that he has not ceased to be capable of speech.[2]

On the question of whether God may be seen, Ibn Ḥanbal quotes Jahm as saying: " It is not proper for any one to look at his Lord: a thing looked at is passible and qualifiable; things are only seen by refraction." (p. 13a.) And again later in the argument: " Allah is not seen in in this world or the next." (p. 13b).

On the question of the use of God's speech in creation, the following arguments are advanced:

Ibn Hanbal: " If Allah did not speak, how did He create all things? Is there another? He created all things by His speech and His word, seeing that He says: 'Our word to a thing when we will it, is but to say 'Be', and it is'," Q.16: 42.

The Jahmiya: " The meaning of 'Our word to a thing . . .' is that our wanting it brings it into being." (This is identical with Clement's view that God's bare volition created the universe, as below.)

The following views by the Church Fathers are representative:

Clement: " Human art, moreover, produces houses, and ships, and cities, and pictures. But how shall I tell what God makes? Behold the whole universe; it is His work: and the heaven, and the sun, and angels, and men, are the works of His fingers. How great is the power of God! His bare volition was the creation of the Universe. For God alone made, because He alone is truly God. By the bare exercise of volition He creates; His mere willing was followed by the springing into being of what He willed."[3]

Justin: "Whenever God says . . . 'The Lord spoke to Moses . . .' you must not imagine that the unbegotten God

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[1] See Chap. 3, p.46

[2] Al-Ash'arī: *Maqālāt*, I, pp. 283, 285.

[3] Clement: *Protrepticus*, Chap. 4, p. 190.

Himself came down or went up to any place. For the ineffable Father and Lord neither has come to any place, nor walks, nor sleeps, nor rises up, but remains in His own place, wherever that is, quick to behold, quick to hear, having neither eyes nor ears, but being of indescribable might; He sees all things, and none of us escapes His observation; and He is not moved nor confined to a spot, or in the whole world, for He existed before the world was made. How, then, could He talk with anyone, or be seen by anyone, or appear on the smallest portion of the earth, when the people of Sinai were not able to look even on the glory of Him who was sent from Him? . . . Therefore neither Abraham, nor Isaac, nor Jacob, nor any other man saw the Father and ineffable Lord of all . . . but (saw) Him who was according to His will His Son being God and the Angel . . . because He ministered to His will . . . who also was the fire when He conversed with Moses from the bush."[1]

John of Damascus: " Since we find many terms used symbolically in the Scriptures concerning God which are more applicable to that which has body, we should recognize that it is quite impossible for us men clothed about with this dense covering of flesh to understand or speak of the divine and lofty and immaterial energies of the Godhead, except by the use of images and types and symbols derived from our own life. So then all the statements concerning God, that imply body, are symbols, but have a higher meaning: for the Deity is simple and formless. Hence by God's eyes and eyelids and sight we are to understand His power of overseeing all things and His knowledge, that nothing can escape: for in the case of us this sense makes our knowledge more complete and more full of certainty. By God's ears and hearing is meant His readiness to be propitiated and to receive our petitions: for it is this sense that renders us also kind to suppliants, inclining our ear to them more graciously. God's mouth and speech are His means of indicating His will; for it is by the mouth and speech, that we make clear the thoughts that are in the heart." The Damascene goes on to speak of 'God's sense of smell', as His appreciation of our thoughts and good will; 'God's hands' as His energy; His 'right hand' is His aid in prosperity. His 'feet and walk' are symbolic of His succour. His 'anger and fury' are His hatred of and aversion to all wickedness. His 'forgetfulness and sleep and slumbering' are His delay in taking vengeance or postponing help. "To put it shortly, all the statements made about God that imply body have some hidden meaning and teach us what is above us by means of something familiar to ourselves, with the exception of any statement concerning the bodily sojourn of the God-Word."[1]

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[1] Justin: *Dialogue with Trypho*, p. 263.

E. The Doctrine of the Uncreated Qur'ān

Jahm clashed with Muslim orthodoxy on the nature of Qur'ān. Jahm, like the Mu'tazila after him, denied that the Qur'ān was uncreated. He based himself, Ibn Ḥanbal tells us, on such words as *ja'ala*, 'to make', in Q.43: 2: "We have made it an Arabic Qur'ān," and on *Muḥdath*, 'originated' or 'newly produced', as in Q.21: 2: "Every newly made warning (*muḥdath*) comes to them from their Lord." (pp. 4b; 10b).

The orthodox view, if indigenous, may have had its origin in the great reverence in which the Qur'ān was held in the early life of the community. The Qur'ān was more than a sacred book: it was a faithful reproduction of the original Scriptures in heaven. To this heavenly copy, it is not implausible to hold, was transferred the Christian conception of the uncreated Word of God, the Logos, which Muslims had come to know from Christian polemics.[2] It was this conception, which was later applied by the orthodox to the Arabic copies of the Qur'ān, which was so vehemently opposed by Jahm and the Mu'tazila. Their denial of the eternity of the Qur'ān, followed from their repudiation of eternal qualities in God and of eternal decrees. "The Mu'tazilites, the adherents of *tawḥīd*, reserved eternity for Allah and rejected it with regard to any other entity, decree, revelation or quality."[1]

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[1] John of Damascus: *De Fide Orthodoxa* I, Chap. 11, p. 13.

[2] *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 285.

The controversy about the Qur'ān came to assume a central role as far as the Mu'tazila were concerned, a controversy which was ultimately responsible for their downfall. At the peak of their influence under the 'Abbāsid Caliph al-Ma'mūn, the doctrine of the eternity of the Qur'ān was proscribed by decree and the holders of the conservative view were subject to flogging, imprisonment and death. But this had the effect of causing Ibn Ḥanbal to assume the role of martyr and of winning him and his like popular sympathy.

The extent to which the State had assumed the defence of Jahmī-Mu'tazilī doctrine may be seen from the letters sent by Ma'mūn to his Governor in Baghdad enjoining him vigorously to conduct the *miḥna* or inquisition to root out the belief in an uncreated Qur'ān.

"The Commander of the Faithful," Al-Ma'mūn wrote, "... has come to know ... the great danger ... as well as the seriousness of the corruption and harm which will come to religion thereby; the sayings which the Muslims are passing round among themselves as to the Koran; ... the confusedness of the opinion of many of them about it until it has seemed good in their opinions and right in their minds that it has not been created: and, thus, they expose themselves to the risk of denying the creating by God of all things, by which (act) he is distinguished from his creation. He in His glory stands apart in the bringing into being of all things by His wisdom and the creation of them by His power, and in His priority in time over them by reason of His being Primitive Existence, whose beginning cannot be attained and whose duration cannot be reached.

"Everything apart from Him is a creature from His creation—a new thing which He has brought into existence. (This perverted opinion they hold) though the Koran speaks clearly of God's creating all things, and proves it to the exclusion of all differences of opinion. They are, thus, like the Christians when they claim that 'Isā bin Maryam' was not created because He was the word of God. But God says 'Verily we have made it a Koran in the Arabic language', and the explanation of that is, 'Verily we have created it', just as the Koran says, 'And He made from it his mate that he might dwell with her'."[1]

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[1] A. J. Wensinck: *The Muslim Creed*, p. 78.

In a scathing reference to Ibn Ḥanbal later in the correspondence, Al-Ma'mūn orders His Governor to inform him of his displeasure, adding that from what he knows of him, " he infers his ignorance and the weakness of his intellect."[2]

A modern Muslim writer sides with the liberal al-Ma'mūn and the rest of the Mu'tazilīs in rejecting Ibn Ḥanbal's view of an eternal word of God and an eternal Qur'ān.[3]

What then can we say about the provenance of this strange doctrine of the uncreated Qur'ān for which Ibn Ḥanbal and other orthodox Muslims were prepared to suffer imprisonment, flogging and even death? Al-Ma'mūn in the letter to his governor inadvertently put his finger on the source of the doctrine when he accuses orthodox Muslims of claiming for the Qur'ān what Christians claim for Jesus, namely that it is the uncreated word of God. Duncan Macdonald is of the same opinion when he says: " Whatever proofs of this doctrine may have been brought forward later from the Qur'ān itself, we can have no difficulty in recognizing that it is plainly derived from the Christian Logos and that the Greek Church, perhaps through John of Damascus, has again played a formative part. So, in correspondence with the heavenly and uncreated Logos in the bosom of the Father, there stands this uncreated and eternal Word of God; to the earthly manifestation in Jesus corresponds the Qur'ān, the Word of

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[1] W. M. Patton: *Aḥmed Ibn Ḥanbal and the Miḥna*, pp. 66, 67.

[2] Ibid. p. 77.

[3] Dr. Ḥamūdeh Gharabeh: *Al-Ash'ari*, p. 117.

God which we read and recite. The one is not the same as the other, but the idea to be gained from the expressions of the one is equivalent to the idea which we would gain from the other, if the veil of the flesh were removed from us and the spiritual world revealed."[1]

Further evidence of the Christian provenance of the orthodox doctrine of an eternal word of God may be deduced from a tract by John of Damascus. In this controversial work he instructs Christians in how to meet Muslim attacks and advises the Christian disputant to get the Muslim to admit from his own Scriptures that Jesus Christ is the Spirit and the Word. This done, the Muslim will face a dilemma: he must either accept Jesus as the uncreated Word, or he will be forced to say that God was without word or spirit before He created them for Himself.[2] The Muslim answer, forged in controversy, was that God was never without a word, but that the eternal word was not Jesus but the uncreated and eternal Qur'ān.

Macdonald can be taken to sum up the discussion when he writes that the doctrine " seems to have originated by a kind of transfusion of ideas from Christianity and not as a result of controversy or dialectic about the teaching of the Qur'ān."[3]

F. The Doctrine of the Last Things

Eschatology was another subject over which Muslim orthodoxy clashed with Jahm's heterodoxy. Ibn Ḥanbal accused the Jahmiya of misinterpreting Q.57: 3, " He is the first and the last " to mean that Paradise and Hell will eventually pass away and that Allah will remain alone as He was in the beginning. (p. 19a).

The early heresiographer Al-Malaṭī states that " Jahm asserted that Heaven and Hell will cease, and the inmates of Hell will leave their abode and so will the obedient leave

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[1] D. B. Macdonald: Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory, pp. 146, 147.

[2] Migne: *Patrologia, Disputatio Saraceni et Christiani*, vol. XCVI, pp. 1341–1344.

[3] D. B. Macdonald: op. cit. pp. 146, 147.

Heaven after a long stay: Heaven will pass away with its delights and so will Hell and its tortures."[1] Al-Malaṭī says further that "some of the Jahmiya denied that God had scales to weigh men's deeds; they denied that God will make anyone cross the bridge over Hell; they denied that God had two recorders of men's deeds; they denied that the Prophet will intercede for his people so as to release them from Hell; they denied the torture of the tomb and Munkar and Nakīr . . .; they denied that God will be seen and that the angel of death takes the souls of men."[2]

Jahm is singled out for condemnation in the early Muslim creed of Fiqh Akbar I on the ground that he denied the punishment in the tomb. In his denial of the eternity of Paradise and Hell, he is followed by Bishr al-Marīsī[3] whom we have had occasion to mention as a connecting link between Jahm and the Mu'tazila. Another to adopt Jahm's teaching was the important early Mu'tazilī Abū Hudhail, whose "eternal silence" is identical with Jahm's idea of the passing away of Heaven and Hell. Both Abū Hudhail and the sceptical Mu'tazilī savant al-Jāḥiẓ (+869) indicate the course the Mu'tazila were taking under Jahm's influence.

Abū Hudhail came under attack from Ibn al-Rawandī (+910) who broke away from the Mu'tazila to become an outspoken critic of the movement. He maliciously pointed out that when the "eternal silence" will suddenly descend on the abode of bliss it will take its inmates unawares and freeze them in awkward postures. The Mu'tazilī spokesman Al-Khaiyāṭ, in his book *Kitāb al-Intiṣār*, failed to see the humour of Ibn al-Rawandī's remark and quoted Abū Hudhail to say that God would see to it that his friends were composed in the most becoming postures when overtaken by the "eternal silence."[4] Al-Jāḥiẓ was accused by Ibn al-Rawandī of denying that God condemned anyone to eternal torment and of maintaining instead that the fire would by its very nature draw the unbeliever to itself.[1]

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[1] Al-Malaṭī: *Al-Tanbih*, p. 134.
[2] Ibid. p. 96.
[3] Al-Ashari: *Maqālāt*, I, pp. 148, 149.
[4] Al-Khaiyāt: *Kitab al-Intiṣār*, p. 57.

Perhaps a more serious criticism of Abū Hudhail was Ibn al-Rawandī's charge that he taught that when the eternal silence will descend the believer will be in the same state as his Lord, في حالة واحدة.[2]

We can now understand how Ibn Ḥanbal, as a good Muslim, revolted against the whole heretical eschatology, initiated by Jahm and adopted and embroidered by such thinkers as Abū Hudhail and Al-Jāḥiẓ. His instinct was right in condemning these foreign anti-Islamic, anti-Qur'ānic trends.

It is noteworthy that the very same charge which Ibn al-Rawandī levels against Abū Hudhail is levelled by Jerome against Origen. The parallel is the more striking in that the same offending phrase, " in the same state (as the Lord) " is used by both Origen and Abū Hudhail. Origen's view appears to be that in Paradise we shall throw off our bodies, return to our first state of rational and incorporeal beings, to be in the same state as God, who shall be " all in all." This may be seen from the following quotation from Jerome's translation of Origen in his Epistle to Avitus, No. 94, in which the offending phrase mentioned above is found in the last line: " That we must believe the end of all things to be incorporeal, the language of the Saviour Himself leads us to think, when He says, 'As I and Thou are one, so may they also be one in us' (John 17: 21). For we ought to know what God is, and what the Saviour will be in the end, and how the likeness of the Father and the Son has been promised to the saints; for as they are one in Him, so they are also one in them. For we must adopt the view, either that God of all things is clothed with a body, and as we are enveloped with flesh, so He also with some material covering, that the likeness of the life of God may be in the end produced also in the saints; or if this hypothesis is unbecoming, especially in the judgement of those who desire, even in the smallest degree, to feel the majesty of God, and to look upon the glory of His uncreated and all-surpassing nature, we are forced to adopt the other alternative, and despair either of attaining any likeness to God, if we are to inhabit for ever the same bodies, or if the blessedness of the same life with God is promised to us, we must live in *the same state* as that in which God lives."[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 70.

[2] Ibid. pp. 56, 57.

A further parallelism between Jāḥiẓ and Origen is to be found in what they say on the subject of hell-fire; two points are particularly important. Origen held that punishment is not eternal since it is in the nature of a refiner's fire which cleanses rather than destroys.[2] Al-Jāḥiẓ says that the fire is kindled not by the Lord but by the sinner himself within his own heart; its fuel is his own evil.

G. Bar Sudaili's Consummation

Origen's teaching may be divided for our purpose into two compartments: (1) his cosmology, (2) his eschatology. We shall later have occasion to deal with his cosmological speculations which, as we shall see, were adopted by some Mu'tazilīs. Our concern here is with his doctrine of the last things as developed later by Stephen Bar Sudaili, a Syrian mystic, who lived in the latter part of the fifth and early sixth centuries.

One of the sources for Bar Sudaili's teaching is a letter by Philoxenus of Mabug[3] in which his doctrines are outlined only to be condemned as heretical. Philoxenus tells us that Bar Sudaili advanced in support of his system Christ's words: "Today and tomorrow I work miracles and on the third day I shall be perfected."[4] This he interpreted parabolically, taking the three days to be Friday, Saturday and Sunday: Friday, on which the creation was accomplished, he calls evil; Saturday, the Sabbath, he calls rest; and Sunday, the first day of the week, he names the

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[1] Origen: De Principiis III, Chap. 6, p. 345 n3.

[2] Ibid. I. 6, 3; II. 3, 5; C. Bigg: *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, p. 229 f.

[3] *Stephen Bar Sudaili*, by A. L. Frothingham, pp. 29–49. Cf. *The Book of the Holy Hierotheos*, ed. and tr. by F. S. Marsh, p. 229 n1.

[4] Luke 13: 32, slightly paraphrased.

Consummation. Three stages are thus distinguished: the first, Friday, is said to represent life upon earth, and is named Motion; the second, represented by the Sabbath, is the period of rest and reward in Paradise; the third and last, represented by the first day of the week, is the Consummation and is called Divinity. In it creation will fuse with the divine substance and the members of the Trinity with one another, and all things will become " one nature and one substance."

This notion of a final fusion of all creation with the Divine corresponds to Abū Hudhail's statement that the believer will finally be in the same state as his Lord. Similarly, Bar Sudaili's last two stages, namely the progression from reward in Paradise to the final consummation is identical with Abū Hudhail's other statement that the believer's stay in Paradise will come to an end and will be followed by the descent of the " eternal silence," when God will once again be alone as He was in the beginning.

Bar Sudaili finds his proof text in I Cor. 15: 26–28: " Then cometh the end . . . all things shall be subdued unto him . . . that God may be all in all." Abū Hudhail, like Jahm before him, finds his in Q.57: 3: " He is the first and the last." There is no doubt, however, about the sameness of the teaching and the dependence. Here as elsewhere, the Mu'tazilī ideas only become clear and meaningful when referred back to their source in the Church Fathers—in this case it is advanced Origenism which has blossomed into full blown Pantheism.

CHAPTER FIVE

Christian Teaching and the Mu'tazila

We have tried in earlier chapters to trace the movement of ideas from the Church Fathers to the early Muslim innovators. We have pointed to certain parallelisms which betray dependence, believing that such close affinity cannot be accidental. We now propose to look at certain Mu'tazilīs who have been influenced by the person of Christ Himself, the Christ of the New Testament rather than the *Masīḥ* of the Qur'ān. These men went to the length of comparing, by implication, Muhammad with both Christ and John the Baptist to the commendation of the two last.

A. CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE ADOPTED BY CERTAIN MU'TAZILA

The extent and reach of Christian influence is illustrated by the beliefs of two associates of the Mu'tazilī theologian al-Naẓẓām (+846); these were Aḥmad b. Ḥāiṭ and Faḍl al-Ḥadathī, and their respective groups. Their true position has sometimes been misrepresented because of their belief in some form of metempsychosis, but a little research reveals that this as well as their belief in pre-existence derives from Patristic Christianity and particularly from Origen.

In his description of these two sectarians and their followers, al-Shahrastānī tells us that they studied Greek philosophy and were responsible for a number of new heresies in addition to those inherited from al-Naẓẓām.

Both men ascribed divinity to Jesus, as Christians do, believing that He will judge mankind at the Resurrection. They also applied to Jesus the Qur'ānic prophecies: " And the Lord shall come and the angels rank on rank " (Q.89: 23); and " . . . that God should come down to them overshadowed with clouds . . . " (Q.2: 206) as well as the prophetic traditions that God created Adam in His own image (i.e. in Jesus' image)[1] and lastly, " that the Mighty

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[1] *Kanz al-'Ummal*, I. p. 203.

One will tread down the sinners in the Fire."[1] Al-Shahrastānī adds that Aḥmad b. Ḥāiṭ maintained that the Christ who put on flesh is the eternal Logos incarnate, as Christians believe.[2]

Still another heresy attributed to these two sectarians is that they applied to Jesus the prophetic tradition "You will see your Lord as you see the full moon,"[3] a patently Christian doctrine. Al-Shahrastānī, reporting their views, says, that the Lord who will be seen is the active Intelligence described in another tradition as the noblest of all created things and God's agent.[4]

In Al-Baghdādī's heresiology, Aḥmad and Faḍl are said to believe in two Lords, Allah the uncreated, and Jesus, son of Mary, who is created and is the son of God by adoption. Jesus was Reason before He put on a garment of flesh.[5]

The notions that Jesus was Reason before His incarnation and that there were two Lords is strongly reminiscent of Origen's teaching, as may be seen from the passage in *Contra Celsum* which speaks of Reason as dwelling in the soul of Jesus. After saying that the Son of God is Wisdom and Righteousness, (as in 1 Cor.1:30), Origen adds: "And although we may call Him a 'second God' we mean nothing else than a virtue capable of including all other virtues, and a reason capable of including all reason whatsoever which exists in all things, which have arisen naturally, directly, and for the general advantage, and which 'reason' we say, dwelt in the soul of Jesus, and was united to Him in a degree far above all other souls, seeing He alone was enabled completely to receive the highest share in the absolute reason, and the absolute wisdom, and the absolute righteousness."[6]

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[1] Ibid. I, p. 209.
[2] Al-Shahrastānī: *Al-Milal*, p. 42.
[3] *Kitab al-Sunna*, p. 42.
[4] Al-Shahrastānī: *Al-Milal*, p. 44.
[5] Al-Baghdādī, pp. 260, 261, tr. A. Halkin, 95, 100.
[6] Origen: *Contra Celsum*, Book V, Chap. 39.

B. ORIGEN'S PRE-EXISTENCE

The particular formulation of Aḥmad's and Faḍl's belief in pre-existence leaves little doubt that we have here a clear case of direct borrowing. Al-Shahrastānī tells us that both men believed that God's creatures were created perfect in a world other than our own في دار سوى هذه الدار and having been created with a knowledge of Himself and endowed with His grace, gratitude was expected of them. Some of the people so created were perfectly obedient, others wholly rebellious, others again were only partially obedient. The perfectly obedient were established in the Paradise where they were first made; the disobedient and rebellious were driven out and sent down to Hell for punishment; the partially obedient were clad in thick flesh and were sent down to this world to be tried with good and evil, hardship and comfort, pleasure and pain. They were given the bodies of men or animals in accordance with the gravity of their sin: the degree of their obedience or disobedience determined their beauty of form and the amount of suffering they had to bear. They were to continue in this world, assuming different forms, as long as they persisted in sin or were obedient.[1]

That Origen taught pre-existence is too well known to need demonstrating here. But to quote the doctrine and give references is difficult because it is diffused in his writings, and also because much of it was modified by his translator Rufinus to save giving offence to Roman Christians.

Charles Bigg conveniently summarizes Origen's views as follows: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, that is the perfect heavens and earth, and peopled this world with Intelligences, forming in the Son the ideas, which were then realized by the Son as Agent.[2] . . . The spirits were equal and alike, but they were free. Some sinned and fell, some remained steadfast in their first estate, or rose to higher levels of power and goodness.

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[1] Al-Shahrastānī: *Al-Milal*, pp. 42, 43.

[2] Origen: *De Principiis*, 2: 9.

The latter are the stars, the angels in the various degrees of their hierarchy. Of those who rebelled some became devils, fiends or archfiends, according to the manifold proportion of their transgression. But those whose error was less, whose love of God is cold yet not extinct . . . turned into 'souls' better or worse according as the faculties of sense and desire gained the upper hand over the intelligence. For these at any rate there is hope of restitution, yet only through chastisement. The appointed scene of their discipline is this world, a later and grosser model of the first. It is infinitely various, to afford scope for the treatment proper to every phase of character . . . Wherefore neither will the Creator seem unjust, when He distributes to each his earthly lot, nor will anyone think, that birth happy or unhappy is ruled by chance, nor that there are different creators, nor that souls have different natures."[1]

The last few lines are of great importance as showing that according to Origen, God's justice required some such explanation as pre-existence. Ibn Ḥazm saw the point when he says of Aḥmad b. Ḥā'iṭ and Faḍl al-Ḥadathī, that what lay behind all their teaching was the Mu'tazilite principle of justice.[2]

When Ibn Ḥazm says that Aḥmad b. Ḥā'iṭ believed " that birds, fishes and other animals, and even bugs, mosquitoes, lice, mice and monkeys . . . have had prophets sent to them by God with a message for their kind " we wonder if he is not just being abusive. Charles Bigg denies that Origen believed in the migration of a human soul into the body of a beast; " Origen no doubt held that at the Resurrection the soul passes from one body into another . . . But metempsychosis, in the sense of a migration of the soul into another human body or into the body of a beast, a plant, and so forth in another life on this same earth (and this is the only meaning of the word) he certainly did not hold."[3] The following fragment translated by Jerome, however, confirms the view that Origen did in fact believe in some form of metempsychosis: "It is an evidence of great negligence and sloth, that each one should fall down to such (a pitch of degradation), and be so emptied, so that, in coming to evil, he may be fastened to the gross body of an irrational beast of burden."[1]

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[1] Charles Bigg: *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, pp. 196–198.

[2] Ibn Ḥazm: *Al-Fiṣāl*, IV. p. 198.

[3] Op. cit. p. 198 n.

C. AL-INTIṢĀR, pp. 107–109

The Mu'tazilī apologia *Al-Intiṣār* by Al-Khaiyāṭ confirms the views attributed to Aḥmad b. Ḥā'iṭ and Faḍl al-Ḥadathī and throws further light on the position of the Mu'tazila. This section is taken up with an exchange of accusations between the Mu'tazila and Ibn al-Rawandī, a critic of the movement. Al-Jāḥiẓ accuses some Shi'ites of deifying 'Ali. The Shi'ite Ibn Al-Rawandī counter-charges by accusing Aḥmad and Faḍl of ascribing divinity to Jesus the Messiah, and of asserting that he was superior to the Prophet.

In answering these charges, Al-Khaiyāṭ says that Faḍl was ejected from the Mu'tazilī assemblies after he had forsaken the truth and that Aḥmad was reported for heresy to Ibn Abū Dāūd, Al-Ma'mūn's vizir, but that he had died and gone to hell before anything could be done about it.

The controversy between Shi'ites and Mu'tazilīs, reported by Al-Khaiyāṭ, gives us an insight into what the latter considered were the relative merits of Muḥammad, Jesus and John the Baptist. Their arguments suggest that they thought Jesus superior but this was a conclusion which they were reluctant to express openly.

Ibn Al-Rawandī tells us that, in clashes with the Shi'ites, the Mu'tazilīs quoted the following five passages from the Qur'ān: (1) "He frowned, and he turned his back because the blind man came to him."—Q.80: 1. (2) "Why, O Prophet! dost thou hold that to be forbidden which God hath made lawful to thee, from a desire to please thy wives . . . ?"—Q.66: 1. (3) " Had there not been a previous ordinance of God, a severe chastisement had befallen you, for *the ransom* which ye took."—Q.8: 69. (4) " God forgive thee! Why didst thou give them leave *to stay behind*, ere they who make true excuses had become known to thee, and thou hadst known the liars?"—Q.9: 43. (5) " Verily, we have won for thee an undoubted victory—*in token* that God forgiveth thy earlier and later faults . . ."—Q.48: 1.

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[1] Jerome: *Epistle to Avitus*; *De Principiis*, p. 267.

Ibn al-Rawandī adds that the Mu'tazilīs followed up the recitation of these verses (all of which point to the Prophet's lapses) by asserting that the nation was agreed that John the Baptist was sinless. He concludes that the Mu'tazilīs refrained from publicly drawing the obvious inference, (presumably, that John the Baptist was superior).

Al-Khaiyāṭ defends the Mu'tazilīs against Ibn al-Rawandī's charges by asking how it could possibly be wrong to cite the Qur'ān and why this should make the Shi'ites angry. Were they suggesting that the verses quoted were not part of God's word? Al-Khaiyāṭ was being evasive: he well knew why these verses were provocative.

The passage in al-Khaiyāṭ speaks for itself, showing clearly that it would be hard to overestimate the impact of Christianity on the development of Muslim thought.

D. John of Damascus and the Mu'tazila

We explored in Chapter One the dependence of the Qadarīya on John of Damascus for their ideas on free will. We shall now briefly refer to a similar relationship between the Damascene and the Mu'tazila, heirs of the Qadarīya, on the question of God's relations to man.

Al-Shahrastānī tells us that it was universally held by the Mu'tazila that wisdom carried with it the obligation to do that which was salutary (*ṣalāḥ*) and good. As God was wise He must do what was salutary for His creatures. But the Mu'tazila were not agreed on whether God was under any constraint to do the best (*al-aṣlaḥ*) for man.[1] Abū-Hudhail, however, is reported by Al-Ash'arī as saying that "anything more salutary than what Allah does cannot be conceived."[2] ولا صلاح اصلح مما فعل

The view of John of Damascus on this point is that God must Himself be both Creator and Provider for if some other agent did the providing it would argue a deficiency on His part: "God alone is good and wise by nature. Since then He is good, He provides . . . Again, since He is wise He takes the best care over what exists."[3]

If God does what is salutary for His creation, what is there left for man to do? Al-Shahrastānī tells us that the Mu'tazilī Wāṣil, following in the path of Ma'bad al-Juhanī and Ghailān the Damascene, said that "the Creator is wise and just to whom no evil or wrong-doing may be attributed . . . Man is himself the perpetrator of his good and evil deeds, such as faith and unbelief, obedience and disobedience, for which he is also rewarded, having been empowered by the Lord to do all these things. Man's sphere of action is restricted to movement and rest, direction, reflection and knowledge."[4]

John of Damascus held identical views: "Under which, then of these categories are we to bring what happens through the agency of man, if indeed man is not the cause and beginning of action? For it would not be right to ascribe to God actions that are sometimes base and unjust: nor may we ascribe them to necessity . . . nor to fate . . . nor to nature . . . nor to chance . . . nor to accident . . . We are left then with this fact, that the man who acts and makes is himself the author of his own works, and is a creature endowed with free-will."[5] The Damascene goes on to say that there are many things which God alone can do: our birth is due to His "Creative

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[1] Al-Shahrastānī: *Al-Milal*, pp. 30, 31.

[2] Al-Ash'ari: *Maqālāt* I. p. 239.

[3] John of Damascus: *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Book. II, Chap. 29, p. 41.

[4] Al-Shahrastānī: *Al-Milal*, p. 32.

[5] John of Damascus: *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Book. III, Chap. 25, pp. 39, 40.

Power." Our continuance to His "Preserving Power," and our safety to His "Providential Power."[1] He maintains, however, that all mental and deliberate acts are in our hands,"[2] except for the over-ruling Providence which sometimes checks our actions.

The Mu'tazilīs held, in opposition to Muslim orthodoxy, that the evil that men do is willed by themselves and not by Allah. God is displeased but does not intervene between a man and his works. The terms used to express this notion are *lā yaḥūl* meaning 'He does not intervene,' and *khalla bain* or *takhliya*, meaning 'He leaves man alone, (with his works).[3] These new ideas conflicted in important respects with the established orthodox position. The Waṣīya of Abu Ḥanīfa declares that sinful acts are committed "not by Allah's command but by His will (*mashī'a*); not by His liking it but by His decision (*qaḍā'*); not by His good pleasure but by His decree (*taqdīr*) and creation (*takhlīq*); not by His help (*tawfīq*); by His abandoning (*khadhlān*) and His knowledge (*'ilm*); not by His knowledge (*ma'rifa*) but by His writing it on the preserved tablet (*lawḥ maḥfūẓ*)."[4]

The Mu'tazilī position, as we have come to expect, tallies with that of John of Damascus and differs widely from Muslim orthodoxy. John held that in respect of "actions that are in our hands, the good ones depend on His antecedent good-will and pleasure, while the wicked ones depend neither on His antecedent nor on His consequent will, but are a concession to free-will."[5] In the next section, we shall examine in more detail the question of God's non-interference.

E. God's Non-Interference

The Mu'tazilīs held that God does no evil nor does He desire it.[1] They quoted Q.39: 9: " . . . He is not pleased (*lā yarḍā*) with thanklessness (*kufr*) unbelief or ingratitude in His servants . . ." To the Mu'tazilīs, *lā yarḍā* was the equivalent of *lā yurīd*, 'He does not will'. This conflicts with orthodoxy which insists that evil actions fall within the sphere of God's will. The Mu'tazila answer to the question, " Is God disobeyed against His will?" was that He does not intervene between man and his works—*lā yaḥūl*; He leaves man free—*khalla bain*.

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[1] John of Damascus: *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Book III, Chap. 28, p. 41.

[2] Ibid, Chap. 26 p. 40.

[3] Al-Ash'arī: *Maqālāt*, I. p. 190; Letter ascribed to Hasan al-Basrī in *Der Islam*, Vol. 21 (1933), p. 73. Ibn Qutaiba: Al-Ikhtilāf fi 'l Lafẓ, p. 13. Supra p. 34.

[4] *Waṣiyat Abī Ḥanīfa*. A. J. Wensinck: *The Muslim Creed*, pp. 126, 127, mistranslates the last line to read that sinful acts were *not* written on the preserved tablet.

[5] John of Damascus: *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Book II, Chap. 29, p. 42.

The verbal noun *takhliya*, from the verb *khalla*—'to allow things to happen "—is the term used in the Arabic version of the Damascene's works. In Muslim orthodox creeds, as well as in Ash'arite theological works, the term mostly used is *khadhlān* or *khidhlān*, although *takhliya* is also sometimes found. The term *khadhlān* is derived from Q.3: 154—" . . . But if He abandon you (*yakhdhulkum*), who is he that shall help you when He is gone?" One need hardly add that this " abandoning " is not that of the Damascene nor of the Mu'tazila, since it is said to be predestined and written on the Preserved Tablet. For John, " desertion . . . is when man, after God had done all that was possible to save him, remains of his own set purpose blind and uncured, or rather incurable, and then he is handed over to utter destruction as was Judas. May God be gracious to us, and deliver us from such desertion."[2]

This idea of non-interference is reminiscent of Clement's non-prevention. Clement, speaking of martyrdom, says: " But nothing is without the will of the Lord of the universe. It remains to say that such things happen without the prevention of God; for this alone saves both the providence and the goodness of God. We must not therefore think that His activity produces afflictions (far be it that we should think this!); but we must be persuaded that He does not prevent those that cause them, but overrules for good the crimes of His enemies." And in the same context: " Assuredly sin is an activity, not an existence:

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[1] Appendix I, Creed A.

[2] John of Damascus. *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Book II, Chap. 29, p. 42.

and therefore it is not a work of God."[1]

Lastly we can gauge something of the bitterness of the struggle between the enlightened upholders of the new ideas on free will and the Qur'ān and the old-fashioned determinists by the abuse heaped upon the latter by the Mu'tazilī caliph, al-Ma'mūn: "The Commander of the Faithful considers, therefore, that these men are the worst and the chief in error, being deficient in the belief in God's unity, and having an incomplete share in the faith, vessels of ignorance, banners of falsehood, the tongue of Iblis, who speaks through his friends and is terrible to his enemies who are of God's religion; the ones of all others to be mistrusted as to their faithfulness, whose testimony should be rejected, and in whose word and deed one can put no confidence."[2]

Ismā'īl b. 'Abbād also abuses the determinists and applies to them Q.25:46; "They are just like the brutes: Yes! They stray even further from the *right* way."[3]

F. THE INIQUITY OF THE ARIANS

We should like to conclude this discussion of Christian influences on the Mu'tazila with an examination of a phrase in popular usage which betrays the extent of this influence. The expression is found in a letter attributed to the Prophet, which was alleged to have been sent to the Byzantine emperor, Heraclius. The letter is quoted in the famous collection of tradition by al-Bukhārī (d. 870). We are not concerned here with its historicity or with the likelihood or unlikelihood of the despatch of this and similar letters by the Prophet to kings and governors. What is of immediate interest is the part which runs: "If you turn your back (on Islam), you will be guilty of the iniquity of the *Arīsiyin*."[4]

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[1] Clement: *Stromata* IV, 13, 14.

[2] W. M. Patton: *Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal and the Miḥna*, p. 59.

[3] Ismā'īl b. 'Abbād: *Risala fi-'il Hidaya wā-'l Ḍalāla*, p. 36.

[4] Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. I, pp. 92, 93.

Al-Qasṭallānī (+1517) in his commentary on al-Bukhārī,[1] finds great difficulty in making sense of the passage and fails to recognize in the phrase the name of Arius, the fourth century Alexandrine who denied the divinity of Christ, which had been corrupted into Yaris or Aris. Al-Qasṭallānī takes *Arīsiyin* to stand for 'tenant farmers', leaving us to conjecture why the sins of the agriculturists should be on Heraclius' head. The true reading of the phrase is the 'Iniquity of the Arians', not of the tenant farmers. The point I am trying to make is that the 'iniquity of the Arians' was a phrase picked up quite early by Muslims from their Christian neighbours and used innocently by them without a proper understanding of its sense. This is how it found its way into the letters.

A modern parallel which comes to mind is the case of late nineteenth or early twentieth century immigrants to Britain who soon learnt to speak about evolution without knowing anything about Darwin's Origin of Species, a book they could not understand until they had learned enough English. Similarly, intelligent beduins, or sons of beduins, who swarmed into the Christian lands during the Muslim invasion, adopted words and expressions without properly understanding them and which were only later absorbed into their own theology.

The explanation given by some Muslim scholars of how Islam came to speak of a transcendental deity is that it was a reaction against an earlier overemphasis on anthropomorphism,[2] this being the reason why God was denied all attributes applicable to man. But this is an oversimplification which is not true to fact. The true sequence seems to be that the new knowledge, which came to the Arabs after the conquests, clashed with their own orthodox ideas on anthropomorphism, anthropopathism and determinism and there arose an urgent need to reinterpret the Qur'ān and reconcile the teaching of the Muslim Scriptures with the new science. Thus *tashbīh*, or anthropomorphism, came to be condemned not so much as a reaction against the teaching of such men as Hishām b. al-Ḥakam (+795 or 814)[1] but as part of a general process of reconciling their own thinking with the new intellectual influences in a Christian environment. The early Muslim view was clearly anthropomorphic: the Qur'ān was literally interpreted when it spoke of God sitting on the throne which was carried by angels as in Q.69: 17 " And the angels shall be on its sides, and over them on that day eight shall bear up the throne of thy Lord," or when God was spoken of as having a face, eyes and hands. There was also the curious tradition[2] that the Prophet will be invited to sit with Allah on the throne, though but temporarily, based on Q.17: 81—". . . It may be that thy Lord will raise thee to a glorious station." This tradition, by the way, appears to be modelled on Acts 2: 34—". . . The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand."

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[1] Al-Qasṭallānī: *Irshād al-Sāri fi Sharḥ al-Bukhārī.*

[2] Ibn 'Asākir: *Al-Muftarī*, Introduction, p. 12.

Ibn Qutaiba (828–889) speaking as a philologist, assures us that it was misinterpretation (*taḥrīf*) to say that God's hand stood for His grace, or that the word *istawā* (He sat Himself (upon the throne)) is identical with *istawla* (He obtained mastery over the throne).[3] If Ibn Qutaiba wrote under compulsion from the orthodox, as some have suggested, it would still show what the orthodox believed at the time. Al-Awzā'ī (d. 774) is reported to have said: " We and the *tābi'ūn* (the successors of the Prophet's Companions) all say that Allah is on His throne, believing all that has been handed down in the Sunna."[4]

To combat anthropomorphism of the type we have illustrated, the Mu'tazila resorted to an allegorical interpretation of those Qur'ānic verses which attributed human attributes to God. And this is, in fact, the burden of Ibn Ḥanbal's accusation, that they used the *mutashābihāt* or ambiguous verses in support of their heretical views.[5]

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[1] Al-Ash'arī: Maqālāt, I. 31–33.

[2] *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila,* part II, p. 10.

[3] Ibn Qutaiba: *Al-Ikhtilāf fi-'l Lafẓ,* pp. 28, 41.

[4] Dhahabī: *Tadhkirāt al-Ḥuffāẓ,* p. 162.

[5] Ibn Ḥanbal: *Al-Radd,* p. 2b.

Wāṣil's defence was to say that 'perspicuous' verses (*muḥkamāt*) referred to sins for which God had specified the penalty, while 'ambiguous' verses (*mutashābihāt*) referred to sins for which God had not specified the appropriate punishment.[1] He hoped thereby to take the sting out of the accusation. Allegorization will be thus seen to have been an indispensable procedure to bring about the highly-desired reconciliation and accommodation of orthodox Islam with the new ideas which came flooding in from outside. It was only such interpretation which enabled the Mu'tazila to evolve the belief in an absolute deity and even to arrive at a re-evaluation of the Qur'ān itself.

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[1] Al-Ash'arī: *Maqālāt*, I, p. 222 f.

PART III

The Murji'a or Muslim Quietism

CHAPTER SIX

Murji'a Teaching and its Patristic Models

The movement in Islam known as the Murji'a has posed many problems for students of early Muslim thought. It has been described, for instance, as probably "more misunderstood than any other of the Muslim sects."[1] It is the purpose of this chapter to suggest that part of what seems obscure and mysterious may perhaps be explained by reference to the traffic of ideas between Christianity and Islam which has been the general thesis of this essay.

Most scholars begin their exploration of the core of the movement with an examination of the meaning of the word *irjā'* in the Qur'ān—the term usually referred to for both the origins and ideas of the movement. The verse in which it is found is Q.9: 107—"And others await (*murjawna*) the decision of God; whether He will punish them, or whether He will be turned to them . . ." Wensinck, for instance, writes that "The context of this verse only explains the term *irjā'* but may also give an insight into the evolution of the ideas of the Murji'ites."[2]

In the context in question, Muḥammad draws a distinction between two groups which had forsaken him at the expedition of Tabuk. The first were "stubborn in hypocrisy" and would be punished twice (Q.9: 101), while the second were subdivided between those "who have owned their faults" and would be forgiven (Q.9: 103 f) and those who "await the decision of God," with the implication that they were impenitent (Q.9: 107). It is this last group who are said to have been left in suspense (*murjawna*), i.e. judgement on them was postponed.

This verse gives an indication of the central Murji'a doctrine: namely, that the punishment of sinners should be left to God and that we should postpone judgement on them. This contrasted sharply with the view and practice of the Khawārij that Muslim sinners should be combated by the sword. The Murji'a were reluctant to pronounce that anyone was or was not a Muslim, believing that such a decision should be left to God at the Last Judgement. The argument behind their position was that Muslim sinners were still Muslims because faith was indelible and was not nullified by sin. This led them to consider all Muslim countries under Muslim rulers as *Dār Imān* or *Dār al-Islām*, unlike the Khawārij who considered as *Dār al-Ḥarb* Muslim governments and peoples who did not act as they thought the Qur'ān prescribed.[1] The Murji'a derived further support for their position from the Qur'ān's explicit statement that only polytheism was unforgivable—" Verily, God will not forgive the union of other gods with Himself! But other than this will He forgive to whom He pleaseth." (Q.4: 51 and 116).[2]

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[1] W. Montgomery Watt: *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, p. 42.

[2] A. J. Wensinck: *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 412.

The emergence of the Murji'a movement has been variously attributed to the theological controversies of the time or to political developments or to a combination of both. Alfred von Kremer holds the view that the Murji'a, like the Qadarīya, sprang from the theological exchanges which took place in the Umaiyad capital of Damascus.[3] Dr. A. S. Halkin believes them to be a political growth: " Although the Murji'ites are treated here and in other discussions as a dogmatic division in Islam, the view is generally accepted that its rise is to be sought in the political developments in early Islam when the undeserving Umaiyads became the rulers. Refusing to condemn them outright, yet seeing the injustice of their usurpation, they chose to remain non-committal."[4]

We share Dr. Tritton's view that " politics had some share in the birth of the school."[1] Account must be taken, however, of the impact on the Muslim conquerors of the Christian ideas which were current in the countries which fell to them. Perhaps more light on the movement may be obtained by taking a closer look at some of their more particular beliefs, noting their emphasis on motives rather than works and on their coupling, unique in Islam, of faith and love and faith and knowledge.

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[1] Al-Ash'arī: *Maqālāt*, I. p. 144.

[2] Alfred von Kremer translates in his *Gebiete des Islams*, pp. 4, 5 a poem by Thābit Quṭnā (+728) which contains a useful summary of the Murji'ite creed found in the *Aghānī*, vol. 13, 15.

[3] Alfred von Kremer: *Cebiete des Islams*, p. 2.

[4] A. S. Halkin: *Moslem Schisms and Sects*, p. 2, n. 1.

A. Religious Insight

What distinguishes, we think, the Murji'a was their uncommon insight into religion, plumbing depths their contemporaries knew little about. They were thus exposed to the charge of being heretical innovators who flouted religion. We may gauge the strength of the opposition to which they gave rise from the tradition quoted by al-Baghdādī: "The curse of seventy prophets rests on the Murji'a." Those of them who are also Qadarīs, al-Baghdādī adds, deserve to be cursed for more than one reason.[2]

What no doubt offended the orthodox was that they taught, as was alleged, that sin did no harm where there was faith. Belief, they held, should not be defined in terms of observance. Unbelief, or *kufr*, was not neglect of prayer, nor, to take an extreme case, the assaulting or killing of a prophet, or believing in the Trinity. These things could only be done by an unbeliever but were not in themselves unbelief. Unbelief, they said, was *istikhfāf*, that is to hold God's just claims in contempt, and *istiḥlāl* to count forbidden things lawful.[3]

Some of the Murji'a taught that there was no distinction between grave and light sins; they were all of them grave. Others held that a repentant sinner was forgiven not for his deserts but by God's grace and favour. God's forgiveness was broad enough to include sins committed against our fellow men, and that even prophets could commit grave sins. This last view runs counter to the accepted Muslim belief.

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[1] A. S. Tritton: *Muslim Theology*, p. 43.

[2] Al-Baghdādī: *Al-Farq bain al-Firaq*, tr. A. S. Halkin, pp. 1, 2.

[3] Al-Ash'arī: *Maqālāt*, I. p. 142.

B. QUIETISM

Murji'a quietism and tolerance were equally offensive to Muslim orthodoxy. The pro-Murji'a creed, Fiqh Akbar I, which reflects the views of the Murji'a leader Abū Ḥanīfa, contains the prescription to order what is commendable and prohibit what is evil—*al-amr bi-'l ma' rūf wa-'l nahy 'an al-munkar*. This principle, later claimed by the Mu'tazila, seems to have been intended by the Murji'a as a directive to Muslims to lead a good life and not to follow the Khawārij who went about killing and enslaving their fellow Muslims in the name of religion. This tolerance is confirmed by al-Ash'arī who says: "Most Murji'ites say that every transgression is a sin (i.e. not infidelity) and condemn the Khawārij for shedding blood, for seizing women as captives and for looting."[1]

Regarding the principle of *al-amr bi-'l ma'ruf*, al-Ash'arī quotes two anonymous opinions which fit the Murji'a better than any other sect. One of them is that we should combat evil in the heart or mind and, when possible, with the tongue and hand, but never with the sword. The other opinion even forbids the use of the hand.[2]

C. FAITH, KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE

We have pointed above to the role played by faith as indelible and unaffected by sin in the Murji'a system. But even more distinctive was their conjoining faith, knowledge and love. It is this linking of faith with love and knowledge of God, which is unknown in Islam but is found outside

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[1] Ibid, II, p. 456.

[2] Al-Ash'ari: *Maqālāt*, II, p. 452.

Islam in the Church Fathers. How far this notion is from Muslim thinking may be seen from the Imām al-Ḥaramain, al-Juwainī (+1085), who said that God cannot love or be loved.[1]

There is a striking similarity between the Murji'ite conception of faith which cannot be nullified by sin and the Stoic idea of virtue which, when once possessed, cannot be lost.[2] Faith, for some Murji'ites, was immutable: it could not increase or decrease; for others, it could grow but not diminish. It was knowledge and was an abiding possession for those who had attained it. This was just what the Stoics conceived virtue to be.

When we turn to the Church Fathers, we find in Clement the same identification of faith and knowledge, the same insistence on the intellectual nature of faith which we find as virtually the only single common element of all twelve Murji'a subdivisions.[3] Clement taught that faith, though it came first, was perfected by knowledge; believing was the foundation of knowledge; faith and love were the extreme points, the beginning and the end. And as knowledge was communicated through the grace of God, the worth of love beamed forth becoming ever brighter. "For it is said, 'To him that hath shall be given': to faith, knowledge; and to knowledge, love; and to love, the inheritance. And this takes place, whenever one hangs on the Lord by faith, by knowledge, by love and ascends along with Him to where the God and guard of our faith and love is."

Clement's views on this subject are well summarized by Dr. Osborn, as follows: "Knowledge (γνῶσις), says Clement, is the perfection of man as man. This perfection is achieved by the understanding (ἐπιστήμη) of divine things concerning conduct, manner of life and speech, and is harmonious with itself and with the Logos of God. Through such understanding faith is brought to perfection and the believer grows to full manhood. Faith is an intrinsic good. It does not inquire about God but accepts the fact of His existence and glorifies Him. To obtain knowledge one must begin with faith and grow in it by divine grace. To put aside doubts and to believe is the foundation of knowledge. Christ is both the foundation and the superstructure. Neither faith which is the starting point nor love which is the goal can be directly taught. The tradition of knowledge is entrusted to those who have shown themselves worthy of it. We pass from knowledge to the splendour of love, from light to light . . . Depending completely on Christ by faith, knowledge and love, we may climb with Him to the very presence of God. All knowledge comes from God, and by knowledge we are led to the perfect end which has no end . . ."

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[1] Quoted from A. S. Tritton: *Muslim Theology*, p. 185.

[2] Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed. vol. 9, p. 816.

[3] A. J. Wensinck: *The Muslim Creed*, p. 132.

"Faith is, as it were, a direct knowledge of the essential things. Knowledge is the demonstration from the things received through faith, built up strongly and firmly on faith through the teaching of the Lord. It leads on from faith to what cannot be shaken and is grasped by understanding. There is one conversion from paganism to faith and another from faith to knowledge. Knowledge in turn is consummated in love."[1]

D. THE SUPREMACY OF KNOWLEDGE

The affinity of these doctrines with the views which Jahm held in common with the Murji'a is striking. Al-Ash'arī, in his account of the various Murji'a subsections, links Jahm with the first of them and attributes to him the following views: Faith in God is only knowledge of Him, or His apostles and of all that has been revealed. All else is not faith. Unbelief is simply ignorance.[2] Al-Ash'arī goes on to say that the seventh Murji'a subsection, consisting of the followers of Ghailān, assert that faith is the second knowledge of God as distinct from the first knowledge of Him which is innate and compulsory, and which is therefore not faith.[1]

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[1] E. F. Osborn: *The Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria*, pp. 160, 161 and Clements: *Stromata*, Book VIII, Chap. X, pp. 538, 539.

[2] Al-Ash'ari: *Maqālāt*, I, p. 132.

It would be difficult to overestimate the importance the Fathers came to place on knowledge. Edwin Hatch, in his 1888 Hibbert Lectures, bemoaning the growing laxity in the moral tests of admission to the early Christian Church, points to intellectualism as a contributory element, brought about by the " flocking into the Christian fold of the educated Greeks and Romans, who brought with them the intellectual habits of mind which dominated in the age." Hatch adds that " Knowledge, which had always been in some sort an element in Christianity, though not as a basis of association, came to assert its place side by side with love."[2]

A vital passage in Clement's writings on the subject of faith and knowledge is found in his Stromata: " 'By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made of things which appear' . . . Now, inasmuch as there are four things in which the truth resides—Sensation, Understanding, Knowledge, Opinion—intellectual apprehension is first in the order of nature; but in our case, and in relation to ourselves, Sensation is first, and of sensation and understanding the essence of knowledge is formed; and evidence is common to understanding and sensation. Well, Sensation is the ladder to Knowledge; while faith, advancing over the pathway of the objects of sense, leaves opinion behind, and speeds to things free of deception, and reposes in the truth."

Clement goes on to argue that knowledge by itself is not enough: " Knowledge is founded on demonstration by a process of reasoning " but " the first principles are incapable of demonstration . . . Hence it is thought that the first cause of the universe can be apprehended by faith alone. For all knowledge is capable of being taught; and what is capable of being taught is founded on what is known before. But the first cause of the universe was not previously known . . . For knowledge is a state of mind that results from demonstration; but faith is a grace from which what is indemonstrable conducts to what is universal and simple, what is neither with matter, nor matter, nor under matter." Clement concludes by saying: " Knowledge, accordingly, is characterized by faith; and faith, by a kind of divine mutual and reciprocal correspondence, becomes characterized by knowledge."[1]

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[1] Ibid p. 136. Cf. Chap. 2, Ghailan: (b) The Innate Idea of God.

[2] Edwin Hatch: *The Influences of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*, p. 340.

In Origen, we find the model for Jahm's intellectualism: faith, he held, cedes the first place to knowledge and is reserved for " the more simple class of men." " We maintain," said Origen, " that 'human' wisdom is an exercise for the soul, but that 'divine' wisdom is the 'end' . . . Divine wisdom, accordingly, being different from faith, is the 'first' of the so-called 'charismata' of God; and the 'second' after it—in the estimation of those who know how to distinguish such things accurately—is what is called 'knowledge'; and the 'third'—seeing that even the more simple class of men who adhere to the service of God, so far as they can, must be saved—is faith."[2]

Muslim thinkers went to the Qur'ān to find a name for the influential movement whose origins were political but which later became theological, and which they called Murji'a. It seems to have been the normal practice to use the Qur'ān as a source book for such names and terms when required. But it would be a mistake to take the label as standing for the whole theological system of the school. For the name, however interpreted—whether taken to mean postponement of judgement, or hope, or the putting of works below faith—does not describe the whole of the movement. Turning from the name to the movement, we are struck by their unwonted grasp of religious essentials, by the place of love in their system, and more particularly by the dominance of intellectualism. One cannot, therefore, escape the conclusion that, here as elsewhere, Muslim heterodoxy is dependent on Patristic teaching which it reproduces before proceeding to diverge from it and follow its own original course.

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[1] Clement: *Stromata*, Book II, Chap. 4, pp. 349, 450.

[2] Origen: *Contra Celsum*, Book VI, Chap. 12, 13.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Refutation of the Zanādiqa and the Jahmiya

By

Imām Abū ‘Abd Allah Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaibānī
(Ibn Ḥanbal 780-855, *Tadhkirat al Ḥuffāẓ*, vol. 2, p. 18.)

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful: Allah’s blessing on Muḥammad and his household.[1]

Abu’l Ṭāhir al-Mubārak b. al-Mubārak b. al-Ma‘ṭūsh informed us, in writing, (saying): Abu’l Ghanāim Muḥ. b. Muḥ. b. Aḥmad b. al-Muhtadī billahi, permitting them, (said): Abu’l Qasim ‘Abdul ‘Azīz b. ‘Ali al-Azajī, permitting them, (said) on the authority of Abū Bakr ‘Abdu’l ‘Aziz alias Ghulām al-Khallāl,[2] said: Abū Bakr al-Khallāl[3] informed us, granting permission, saying: Al-Khiḍr b. al-Muthanna al-Kindī informed me, (saying): ‘Abd Allah b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal informed us, saying: This is what my father published in refutation of the Zanādiqa and the Jahmiya, concerning the ambiguous passages *mutashābih* in the Qur’ān which they question and misinterpret.

Aḥmad b. Muḥ. b. Ḥanbal said: Praise be to Allah who in every age (and) *fatra*[4] raises up a remnant of learned men, who bearing ill-use patiently, recall the lost to guidance; revive the dead and give sight to blind eyes by means of Allah’s book and His light. Many a one slain by Iblīs have they resurrected! Many a one lost and wandering have they guided aright! How much good have they done others, and how much ill has been done them! They bar from Allah’s book the corruptions of the extravagant,[5] the false professions of the strippers[6] and the interpretations of the ignorant. (p. 2b). All such as fly the flag of heresy and let loose rebellion; Allah's book they dispute over, contradict and unanimously set aside; they speak of Allah and say about Him and His book they know not what; they discuss what is ambiguous in Kalām and deceive the ignorant with their impositions. To Allah we fly for refuge from the guile of the seducers!

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[1] The pious expressions found after the name of the Prophet and others have been omitted from the translation.

[2] Ghulām al-Khallāl +363, A. H. *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila* II, pp. 119–127.

[3] Al-Khallāl +311 A. H. *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, II, pp. 12–15. Al-Dhail ‘ala Ṭabaqāt-al-Ḥanābila p. 12 f. Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāẓ, Vol. 3. p. 7.

[4] *Fatra*: an interregnum in the prophetic succession; an interval.

[5] *Ghali* pl. *ghulāt* MSS, *ghaliyin*: those holding extreme Shi‘a beliefs.

[6] *Mubṭilin, Ibṭāl* is intenser form of ta‘ṭīl, ‘stripping’ Cf. Shorter Ency. Islam *Tashbih.*

I. *Jahm's Doctrine of God*

Such was Jahm and his faction who called men to (their interpretations of) the ambiguities in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth and thereby misled many. This is what we have learned of Jahm the enemy of Allah! He hailed from Tirmidh in Khurāsān; he was disputatious and argumentative, concerning himself mostly with the doctrine of Allah. He encountered certain polytheists called Sumaniya[1] who, knowing Jahm, proposed to debate with him on the condition that the vanquished embraced the faith of the victor.

Part of their argument ran as follows: They said:—
— You assert that you have a God? — Yes
— Have you (p. 3a) seen your God? — No
— Have you heard him speak? — No
— Have you smelled him? — No
— Have you sensed him in any way? — No
— Have you touched him? — No
— Then what makes you believe that he is God?

Jahm was puzzled and for forty days did not know whom to worship. He finally supplied an argument similar to one used by Christians (lit. *Christian Zanādiqa*). Christians allege that the spirit in Jesus is the spirit from Allah's essence. When Allah wished to bring something about, He entered one of his creatures and spoke with its tongue, commanding or forbidding as He desired. He is an invisible spirit.

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[1] Indo-Buddhist philosophers, or Harrānian pagan philosophers; see Maṣʿūdī's *al-Tanbīh wa'l -Ishrāf*, pp. 138, 139.

Jahm argued in the same fashion and said to the Sumanī:

— Do you not assert that you have a spirit in you? — Yes
— Have you seen your spirit? — No
— Have you heard it speak? — No
— Have you sensed it in any way or touched it? — No
— Similarly with Allah: His face is not seen, His voice is not heard; nor is He smelled; He is invisible: He is in no (p. 3b) one place to the exclusion of any other.

Jahm found three ambiguous verses in the Qur'ān: (1) 'Nought is like him', Q.42, 9[1]. (2) 'He is God in the Heavens and on the earth', Q.6: 3, and (3) 'No vision reaches Him', Q.6: 103, on which he built his system. He misinterpreted the Qur'ān and impugned the Ḥadīth of the Prophet, alleging that he who ascribes to Allah those qualities which He ascribes to Himself in his Book or which the Prophet speaks about, is a *kāfir* and a *mushabbih*.[2] He misled many people and found supporters among the companions of Abū Ḥanifa and 'Amr b. 'Ubaid in Basrah. He founded the religion of the Jahmiya.

When asked to explain the text, 'Nought is like Him,' they reply:—Among things, nothing is like Him; He is under the seven earths as He is on His throne; there is no place where He is not, and he is not in one place to the exclusion of any other; He has never spoken and does not speak; no one can see Him in this world or the next; He is not qualifiable, neither is He known by any attribute or act; He has no limit or end; mind cannot apprehend Him; He is all face, all light, all power, without being two (p. 4a) separate things; in Him is neither upper nor lower, no directions and no sides, no right and no left; He is neither heavy nor light; no light has He nor body; nor is He

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[1] All Qurānic quotations are from Rodwell's tr., London, 1918, unless otherwise indicated.

[2] *Mushābbiha*: those guilty of *tashbīh*, anthropomorphism. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal compromises himself on this score by holding fast the Tradition that Allah created Adam in His image. He combated those who said that Allah created Adam in Adam's image by asking: What image did Adam have before Allah created him? *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, II, p. 131.

passible, *ma'mūl*. Whenever you think that He is something you know, He is other than that.
We: He is a thing.
They: He is a thing unlike things. To which we replied that every thinking person knew that a thing unlike things was nothing at all. It thus became evident to everyone that they believed nothing at all, but made open profession to ward off disgust. If asked whom they worshipped, they replied that they worshipped the arbiter of all creation. We then asked whether that arbiter was unknown (*majhūl*) and also His attributes. This they admitted. We then said:—Muslims now know that you believe nothing at all, but make some profession to ward off disgust.

We asked them if that arbiter was the one who had spoken to Moses. They replied that He had not spoken and did not speak. Speech was through an organ and organs were taboo as far as Allah was concerned. An ignorant person hearing them would think that they glorified Allah as no one else did without being aware that it all amounted to (p. 4b) forging lies against Allah.

II. *A Refutation of Jahm's Doctrine of the Qur'ān: the Meaning of ja'ala*

Ask a Jahmī where in Allah's book or in the Sunna he will find it said that the Qur'ān was created. Unable to find, he will say that it is (inferred) from Allah's words: 'We have made it an Arabic Koran', Q.43: 2, alleging that *Ja'ala maj'ūl* is (synonymous with) *makhlūq*, basing his claim on one of the ambiguous verses which are adduced by those who reject the Qur'ān as revelation and misinterpret it with intent to sow discord.

Ja'ala, when referring to creatures, has two different meanings in the Qur'ān: it may mean naming, *Tasmiya*, or doing. The first use occurs in the following verses: 'Who break up the Koran into parts', Q.15: 91, saying that it consists of poetry, chronicles of the ancients and confused dreams: that is they name it so. And again, 'They make the angels who are the servants of the God of Mercy, females', Q.43: 18, that is they call them females. The second use, when it does not mean naming but doing, occurs in the following verse: 'They thrust their fingers into their ears', Q.2: 18; again, 'Until when he had made it red with heat (fire)', Q.18: 95; in these verses *ja'ala* means performing an action and refers to the act of a creature.

(p. 5a) When *ja'ala* is used of Allah to signify creation it invariably means creation and nothing but creation; if used of Allah to signify something other than creation, it is not creation and never stands for creation. In the following verses *ja'ala* signifies creation: 'Praise be to God who has created the Heavens and the Earth, and ordained (*ja'ala*) the darkness and the light', Q.6: 1—that is, He created them, And again, 'And gifted (*ja'ala*) you with hearing and sight', Q.67: 23—that is He created them. And again, 'We have made (*ja'ala*) the night and the day for two signs', Q.17: 13 'And hath placed (*ja'ala*) there the sun as a torch', Q.71: 15. And again, 'He it is who hath created you from a single person and from him brought forth (*ja'ala*) his wife', Q.7: 189. And again, 'And of him created his wife' Q.4: 1. And again, 'And have placed (*ja'ala*) mountains upon it', Q.27: 62, that is, He created mountains upon it. There are many such verses in the Qur'ān in all of which *ja'ala* means creation and nothing else.

ja'ala, however, is also used to mean something other than creation, as in the following verses: 'God hath not ordained (*ja'ala*) anything on the subject of Baḥīra, or Sāiba', Q.5: 102, which does not mean that Allah did not create Baḥīra and Sāiba. And again, Allah said to Abraham, 'I am about to make thee (*jā'iluka*) an imam to mankind', Q.2: 118. Here, too, it does not mean (p. 5b) 'I will create thee' because Abraham's creation had taken place already. Abraham said, 'Lord! Make this secure land,' Q.2: 120; and he said, 'Lord! Grant that I and my posterity may observe prayer', Q.14: 42. He did not mean create me an observer of prayer. And again, 'God will refuse (*lā yaj'alu*) them all part in the life to come' Q.3: 170. Allah said to the mother of Moses, 'We will restore him to thee, and make him one of the apostles', Q.28: 6; this did not mean to create him one of the apostles—as Allah promised his mother to restore him to her and then make him an apostle. And again, 'Put the bad one upon the other, and heap them all up and put them into Hell!' Q.8: 38. And again, 'And we were minded to show favour to those who were brought low in the land, and to make them spiritual chiefs'—no creation is intended—'and to make them Pharaoh's heirs' Q.28: 4. And finally, 'And when God manifested Himself to the mountain he turned it (*ja'ala*) to dust'! Q.7: 139. There are many such verses in the Qur'ān, in all of which *ja'ala* does not mean creation. Now if Allah uses *ja'ala* to mean creation and *ja'ala* to mean something else, on what ground does the Jahmī say that *ja'ala* (only) means creation. If the Jahmī restores to *ja'ala* the meaning Allah gives it (well and good); if not, he will be (p. 6a) one of those who hear the word of Allah and then wilfully pervert it.

Now when Allah says, 'We have made it an Arabic Qur'ān', He means He made it Arabic in the sense of an action performed by God, not in the sense of creation. God says in Sūrat Yūsuf[1]: 'We have made it an Arabic Qur'ān that ye may understand' Q.43: 2. And again, 'That thou mightest become a warner—in the clear Arabic tongue', Q.26: 194, 195. And again, 'Verily we have made this *Koran* easy and in thine own tongue', Q.19: 97. In such phrases as 'making an Arabic Qur'ān' and 'making it easy' and 'in the Prophet's own tongue' the reference is to one of Allah's actions; and 'making it in clear Arabic' means that it is a clear exposition for him whom Allah would guide aright.

The Jahmī made another absurd assertion. He said: 'Tell us about the Qur'ān: Is it Allah or other than Allah?'

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[1] The verse is found in Sūrat Zukhruf and not in Sūrat Yūsuf.

—an assertion which confused people. If this question were put to an ignorant person, he must necessarily say that it was one or the other. If he said it was Allah, the Jahmī would say: 'You have denied the faith'. But if he said (p. 6b) it was other than Allah, the Jahmī would say: 'Well spoken, why then cannot a thing other than Allah be created?' This would so affect the mind of the ignorant as to predispose him to what the Jahmī had said, all of which is simply Jahmite sophistry. The answer to the Jahmī's question is to tell him that Allah did not say in the Qur'ān, 'the Qur'ān is I', nor did He say, 'the Qur'ān is other than I'; He said, 'the Qur'ān is my word', so we name it as He did, *Kalām Allah*. And those who name it as Allah named it are rightly guided, but those who name it by some other name have gone astray.

Allah distinguished between His word and His creation, which he never named speech. He said: 'Is not creation and command (*amr*) His?'[1] When He says 'Is not creation His', He includes all created things; He then mentions things which are not created referring to them as *amr*—that is His word. Blessed be Allah, Lord of the worlds; (far be it) for His word to be a thing created. Again He says: 'See! On a blessed night have we sent it down, for we would warn mankind: on the night wherein all things (lit: every *amr*) are disposed in wisdom' Q.44: 3. He continues: 'By virtue of our behest (*amr*)' Q.44: 4. And again, 'First and last is the affair (*amr*) with God', Q.30: 3, which means that the word is His before and after creation. (p. 7a). Allah then creates and commands and His word is other than His creation. And again, " This is God's command (*amr*) which He hath sent down to you', Q.65: 5. And finally, 'Until our sentence (*amr*) came to pass, and the earth's surface boiled up' Q.11: 42.

III. *A Proof from the Conjunctive Waw that the Qur'ān is Other than Creation*

BĀB: An exposition of the distinction made by Allah between His word and His creation.

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[1] Rodwell: 'Is not all creation and its empire His?' Q.7: 52.

When Allah refers to a single object by two or three names, they are listed loosely (asyndetically) with no distinction drawn. But when Allah names two different things, he does not leave them loose, but introduces a distinction (i.e. the construction is syndetic). Thus He says: 'O Prince! Verily he hath a father, a sheikh, one of great age',[1] all of which refer to one person by three names listed loosely (asyndetically); He does not say: 'A father and a sheikh and one of great age', Again, 'Haply if he put you both away, his Lord will give him in exchange other wives better than you, Muslims, believers, devout . . . women previously married, and virgins'. Now 'virgins' being different from 'women previously married', the construction is not left loose, but a distinction is introduced by saying 'and virgins'. And again: 'The blind and the seeing are not alike', Q.35: 20, the 'seeing' being different persons from the 'blind', they are distinguished. He then continues: 'Neither the darkness and light; nor the shade and the hot wind'; each of these things being different, a distinction is introduced. Again, 'He is the King, the Holy, the Peaceful, the Faithful, the Guardian, the Mighty, the Strong, (p. 7b) the Most High! . . . the Producer, the Maker, the Fashioner!' Q.59: 23, 24. All this being one person, the construction is loose with no distinction introduced. Ergo, when Allah says: 'Is not creation and command (*amr*) His?' a distinction is introduced because creation is different from command.

IV. *The Qur'ān Revealed not Created*

BĀB: An exposition of Allah's denial that the Qur'ān is other than revelation, or that it is created.

He has said: 'By the star when it setteth your compatriot erreth not, nor is he led astray', Q.53: 1, 2. This was because the Quraish contended that the Qur'ān was poetry, or legends of the ancients or confused dreams, or Muḥammad's own logomachy, or something he had learned from someone else. So Allah swore by the setting star, that is by the Qur'ān which He had sent down, and said: 'By the star when it setteth your compatriot'—that is Muḥammad—'erreth not, nor is he led astray. Neither speaketh he from mere impulse'. That is Muḥammad did not recite the Qur'ān from himself. 'The Koran is no other than a revelation revealed to him', Q.53: 1–4. Allah thus denied that the Qur'ān was other than revelation saying so explicitly. He then says: 'One terrible in power taught it him' Q.53: 5—that is Gabriel taught it to Muḥammad—(p. 8a) who 'With even balance stood' Q.53: 6, 7, and concludes, 'And He revealed to His servant what He revealed', Q.53: 10. Allah thus named the Qur'ān revelation not creation.

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[1] Rodwell's freer translation: " O Prince! Verily he hath a very aged father! Q.12: 78, does not make this point clear. The same is the case with verse Q.66: 5 which follows.

V. *The Qur'ān is a Thing*

BĀB: The Jahmī made yet another claim. "Tell us", he said, "Is the Qur'ān a thing?"—"Yes," we replied. He said: "Seeing that the Qur'ān is a thing and Allah is the creator of all things, why cannot the Qur'ān be one of the things created?" Here was something which gave substance to his claim and enabled him to confuse men. We then said: "Allah, in the Qur'ān, did not name his word a thing, but the things He addressed were so named by Him. Did we not hear Him say: 'Our word to a thing'? Q.16: 42. The thing then is not His word but the thing so addressed. And again: 'His command when He willeth aught (a thing) is but to say to it, Be, and it is' Q.36: 82. The thing is not His command, but is that which His command brought into being.

The following are some of the signs and proofs to show that His word is not among things created: Allah said to the wind which He sent against Ād: 'It will destroy everything at the bidding of the Lord' Q.46: 24, and yet, there were certain things such as their houses and dwellings and the surrounding mountains (p. 8b) which the wind did not destroy, even though He said it would destroy everything. Likewise, 'Creator of all things' was not meant to include Himself, or His knowledge or His word among created things.

Again, He said of the Queen of Sheba, 'Gifted with everything', Q.27: 23, although King Solomon's sovereignty was a 'thing' which she was not given. Similarly, when Allah says, 'Creator of all things', He does not mean His word to be included among created things. Again, Allah said to Moses: 'I have chosen thee for Myself (*linafsī*)', Q.20: 43. And again, 'But God would have you beware of Himself', Q.3: 28. And again, 'He had imposed mercy on Himself', Q.6: 12. Also, 'Thou knowest what is in me, but I know not what is in Thee', Q.5: 116. He then says :'Every soul (*nafs*) shall taste of death', Q.3: 182. Every sensible man will know that Allah did not mean (to include) Himself (lit. His *nafs*) among the souls which will taste death, although He said 'Every soul'. Likewise, when He said, 'Creator of all things', He did not mean to include among created things Himself, His knowledge or His word. This is clear proof for him who is wise in the things of Allah. Allah's mercy on him who, on reflection, rejects that which contradicts the Kitāb and the Sunna and who says nothing but the truth concerning Allah.

Allah made a covenant with His creatures and said: 'Hath there not been received on their part a covenant through the Scripture that they should speak nought of God but the truth'? Q.7: 168. And again, 'Truly my Lord hath forbidden filthy actions whether open or secret, (p. 9a) and iniquity, and unjust violence, and to associate with God that for which He hath sent down no warranty, and to speak of God that ye know not', Q.7: 31. Allah thus forbids men to lie regarding Him: 'And on the resurrection day, thou shalt see those who have lied of God, with their faces black', Q.39: 61. Allah protect us and you from the seductions of those who would lead us astray.

Allah refers to His word in another place in the Qur'ān naming it *kalām* not creation: 'And words of prayer learned Adam from his Lord', Q.2: 35. And again, 'Yet a part of them heard the word of God and then . . . perverted it', Q.2: 70. And again, 'And when Moses came at our set time and his Lord spake with him', Q.7: 139. And again, 'He said, "O Moses, thee above all men have I chosen by my commissions and by my speaking to thee"', Q.7: 141. And again, 'And discoursing did God discourse with Moses (*kallama takliman*)', Q.4: 162. And again, 'Therefore believe on God and His Apostle—the unlettered Prophet—who believeth in God and His word', Q.7: 158. Allah thus informed us that the Prophet believed in Allah's word. And again, 'Fain would they change the word of God', Q.48: 15. And again, 'Say; should the sea become ink, to write the words of my Lord, the sea would surely fail ere the words of my Lord would fail', Q.18: 109. Again, 'If any one of those who join gods with God ask an asylum of thee, grant him an asylum that he may hear the word of God', Q.9: 6. He did not say 'that he may hear the creation of God'. Moreover, this is explicitly set out in plain Arabic and does not require the interpretation of believers. Praise be to Allah.

VI. *Allah has not Forbidden us to say 'The Qur'ān is His Word'*

(p. 9b) BĀB: I asked Jahm the question: Did not Allah declare: " Say ye: 'We believe in God' ? " Q.2: 130. And again, 'Speak with men what is right', Q.2: 77. And again, " And say ye, 'We believe in what hath been sent down to us and hath been sent down to you' " Q.29: 45. And again, '. . . Speak with well-guided speech' Q.33: 70. And again, 'Say: Bear ye witness that we are Muslims', Q.3: 57. And again, 'Say: O men, now hath the truth come unto you from your Lord,' Q.10: 108. And again, '. . . Say: Peace be upon you!' Q.6: 54. Nowhere do we hear Allah say: 'My kalām is creation'.

And again, He said: '. . . And say not "Three", . . . Forbear', Q.4: 169. And again," . . . And say not to everyone who meeteth you with a greeting, 'Thou art not a believer' " Q.4: 96. " . . . Say not . . . 'Rā'ina'," Q.2: 98. And again, 'And say not of those who are slain on God's path that they are dead', Q.2: 149. And again, " Say not thou of a thing, 'I will surely do it tomorrow', without 'if God will'," Q.18: 23. And again, 'And say not to them, "Fie" Neither reproach them', Q.17: 24. And again, 'Call not thou on any other god but God', Q.26: 213. And again, '. . . And that ye slay not your children because of poverty', Q.6: 152. And again, 'And let not thy hand be tied up to thy neck', Q.17: 31. And again, '. . . And that ye slay not anyone whom God hath forbidden you, unless for a just cause', Q.6: 152. And again, 'And come not nigh to the substance of the orphan, but to improve it', Q.6: 153. And again, 'And walk not proudly on the earth', Q.17: 39. There are many such verses in the Qur'ān—Allah's prohibitions, but He has never forbidden us to say: 'the Qur'ān is my word'.

The angels called Allah's word *kalām* not creation : He says: 'Until at last when their hearts shall be relieved from terror, they shall say, 'What (p. 10a) saith your Lord?', Q.34: 22. This refers to the angels, [1]who hearing the voice of revelation like iron striking a rock—not having heard it for a number of years—between the coming of Jesus and Muḥammad—(p. 10b) took it for one of the events of the Day of Judgement[2] and fell down on their faces in worship full of fear. And when, at last, their hearts were relieved from terror, they raised their heads asking each of each: "What saith your Lord?" They did not say; "What hath your Lord created." This is clear proof for him whom Allah would guide aright.

VII. *The Meaning of Muḥdath with Reference to the Qur'ān*

Another BĀB: Jahm made yet another claim, he said: " I find a verse in Allah's book which proves the Qur'ān to be created." "Which verse?" "Allah's words: 'Every fresh warning (*dhikr muḥdath*)[1] that cometh to them from their Lord', Q.21 : 2, and every *muḥdath* is created." He thus confused people using ambiguous verses for his purpose. We answered in the following words, after seeking aid from Allah and studying His book. To Allah alone belong all might and all power!

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[1] There are several versions of this tradition in *Kitāb al-Sunna* pp. 62, 63. The word *ṣalṣalah* a rumbling noise is used. In al-Tirmidhī the word used is *silsilah*—the sound of an iron chain dragging on a rock. Al-Tirmidhī, with Ibn al-'Arabi's commentary, Vol. 12, Cairo, 1934. Cf. *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, I, p. 185.

[2] Lit. *al-Sā'ah*, the Hour.

You must know that when two persons—one worthier than the other—are jointly referred to by a general term (p. 11a) when a word of praise is ascribed to them, it is more likely to refer to the more deserving of the two, while a word of blame is more applicable to the other. When Allah says in His book: " . . . For God is right gracious to mankind (*nās*), Merciful", Q.22: 64, and again, " A fount whence the servants (*'ibād*) of God shall drink," Q.76: 6, the general terms are *nās*[2] and *'ibād* but the "Fount whence the servants of God shall drink" is for the just, not for the wicked; for speaking of them singly, He says: " Surely amid delights shall the righteous dwell," Q.82: 13: and He says of the wicked: " But verily, the impure in Hell-fire," Q.82: 14. When He says: " . . . For God is right gracious to mankind, merciful," Q.22: 64, the believer is more deserving of it, even though the general term *nās* is used, because when He refers to the believer singly, He assigns mercy, saying: " And merciful is He to the believers," Q.33: 42. But when He singles out the wicked, He imputes blame saying: " Shall not the malison of God be on these unjust doers?" Q.11: 21. And again," . . . For God is angry with them " Q.5: 83. All such are outside Allah's mercy.

And again, " Should God bestow abundance upon His servants (*'ibād*), they might act wantonly on the earth," Q.42: 26. (p. 11b) The general term *'ibād* includes both believers and unbelievers, but 'wantonness' is more applicable to unbelievers than believers, for believers, when singled out, are praised for the use they make of the abundance bestowed upon them. This is what Allah said: "Those who when they spend are neither lavish nor niggard," Q.25: 67. And again, " . . . And out of what we have bestowed on them, expend for God," Q.2: 2. King David, and his son Solomon and Dhu'l Qarnain were liberally endowed, and so were Abū Bakr and 'Uthmān, and many others like them who yet did not act wantonly. But the unbelievers, when singled out, are called wanton. Wantonness is ascribed to Qārūn (Korah), concerning whom He says: " . . . But he behaved haughtily toward them; (for we have given him treasure that its keys would have burdened a company of men of strength)" Q.28: 76. Also Nimrod, the son of Kan'ān, " . . . Who disputed with Abraham about his Lord," when "God had given him the kingdom," Q.2: 260. Also Pharaoh, of whom Moses said: "O our Lord! Thou hast indeed given to Pharaoh and his nobles splendour and riches in this present life," Q.10: 88. The believers and the unbelievers jointly referred to by a general term, the wantonness ascribed is more applicable to the unbeliever, as mercy is more applicable where the believer is concerned. Therefore when Allah says: "Every fresh warning that cometh to them from their Lord," two warnings are jointly spoken of—that of Allah and that of His Prophet. When Allah's warning is spoken of singly, *ḥadath* is not used. Did you not hear Him say: " . . . And the gravest duty is the remembrance (*dhikr*) of God?" And a blessed remembrance it is! But when the Prophet's warning is singled out, *ḥadath* (fresh, new) is applied. Did we not hear Allah say: "God hath created you and what ye make?" Q.37: 94. The Prophet's warning has, therefore, a maker, Allah being its creator and originator.

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[1] *Muḥdath*; fresh, originated.

[2] MS: *insān.*

The proof that Allah refers jointly to two warnings is when He says: (p. 12a) "Every fresh warning cometh . . ." qualifying the warning as fresh (*ḥadath*) when we are told it, and it only comes, as you know by information brought to us by an informant and a monitor. Allah has said: "Yet warn them for, in truth, warning will profit the believers."

Q.51: 55. " Warn, therefore, for the warning is profitable." Q.87: 9. " For thou art a warner only," Q.88: 21. The two being referred to jointly by one term—warning—they are described as 'fresh' (*ḥadath*). But spoken of singly, the Prophet's warning is more suitably called 'creation' and 'fresh' than is Allah's warning, which if singled out cannot be called either 'creation' or 'fresh'. This then is our proof from Allah's word that the 'fresh warning' from the Lord is fresh as far as the Prophet is concerned who did not know it until he learned it from Allah and in that sense is *muḥdath*.

VIII. *The Qur'ān, Unlike Jesus, is Uncreated*

BĀB: Then the Jahmī made this claim. He said: " I have found a verse in Allah's book to prove that the Qur'ān is created." We: " Which verse is it?" He: " It is Allah's word: 'The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is only an apostle of God and His Word . . .' Q.4: 169. Now Jesus (the Word) is created, (so why cannot the Qur'ān be created?)" We replied: " Allah has deprived you of reason: the things said concerning Jesus in the Qur'ān cannot be said of the Qur'ān. Jesus is called offspring, infant, child and youth; he used to eat and drink; he was commanded and restrained with promise and threat; he was, moreover, descended from Noah and Abraham. We cannot say of the Qur'ān what we say about Jesus. Did you ever hear Allah do so? But what Allah means (p. 12b) when He says, "The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is only an apostle of God and His word which He conveyed into Mary," Q.4: 169, "is that the word which Allah cast into Mary was His saying to him: 'Be!' (*Kun!*) Jesus was, therefore, brought into being by 'Be!' but was not himself that 'Be!' 'Be!' is Allah's word and is uncreated."

The Christians and the Jahmiya lie concerning Allah in matters referring to Jesus. The Jahmiya say: "Jesus is Allah's Spirit and His Word—which Word is created". The Christians say: "Jesus is Allah's Spirit from His own essence and Allah's Word from His own essence", as we would say, "this scrap of cloth is from that garment". We say that Jesus was brought into being by Allah's word, Jesus himself not being that word. And when Allah says that Jesus is " A spirit proceeding from Himself (*minhu*)," Q.4: 169, it means that the spirit was in him by Allah's command, as when He says: " And He hath subjected to you all that is in the Heaven and all that is on the Earth, all is from Him (*minhu*)," Q.45: 12, where it means that it is by His command. And the interpretation of the words " Allah's spirit " is a spirit created by Allah's word, just as we would say " Allah's servant," and " Allah's heaven."[1]

IX. *Allah's Word is Above the Heavens*

BĀB: The Jahmī made yet another claim, saying: " Allah said, '. . . Who in six days created the Heavens and the Earth, and whatever is between them'," Q.25: 60. He, therefore, asserted that the Qur'ān must be either in heaven, on earth or in between. This was the way he confused and deceived people.

We said: " Did not Allah call 'creation' things in heaven, on earth and in between?" He agreed.[2] We: (p. 13a) " Are there any created objects above the heavens?" He answered: " Yes." We: " He did not include things above the heavens among created things and every scholar knows that above the seven heavens are the seat, the throne, the preserved tablet, the veils and many things unnamed which are not included among things created. Allah was only speaking of things in heaven, things on earth and things in between. Why then do you allege that the Qur'ān must either be in heaven, on earth or in between?"

We: " Allah says: 'We have not created the heavens and the earth and all that between them is, but for a worthy end'[1] Q.15: 85. Now, therefore, that with which heaven and earth were created existed before the heavens and the earth. This 'truth' (*ḥaqq*) with which He created them is His word (*qaul*), (as it says) 'But God speaketh the truth', Q.33: 4. And again, 'It is the truth and the truth I speak', Q.38: 85. Also, '. . . And when He saith to a thing "Be!" it is. His word is the truth'[2] Q.6: 72, 73. This is the truth (*ḥaqq*) with which He created heaven and earth and truth (*ḥaqq*) is His word (*qaul*), which is uncreated."

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[1] Ibn Ḥanbal's denial that Jesus is named *kalimat Allah* seems in contradiction with " This is Jesus, the son of Mary, the Word of Truth (qaul al-ḥaqq)," Q.19: 35. But see Rodwell's freer translation: " This is Jesus, the son of Mary: this is a statement of the truth . . .", see also Q.3. 40.

[2] After using the singular for Jahm, Ibn Ḥanbal here reverts to the plural. We have diverted from the MS in several Bābs using the singular or the plural throughout for the sake of uniformity.

X. *The Beatific Vision*

BĀB: An exposition of the denial by the Jahmiya of Allah's words: "On that day shall faces beam with light, looking at their Lord"[3] Q.75: 22. We asked them: "Why do you deny that those in Paradise will look at their Lord?" They replied: "It is not proper for any one to look at his Lord: a thing looked at is passible and qualifiable; things are only seen by refraction."[4] "Does not Allah say," we then asked, "'Looking at their Lord'?" They replied: "It means that they look at their reward from their Lord and His work and power" quoting the verse: "Hast thou not (p. 13b) seen thy Lord lengthening out the shadow?"[5] Q.25: 47. They said further: "When He said, 'Hast thou not seen thy Lord . . .' it meant 'thy Lord's work'." We replied: "Allah's works are continually being seen by His creatures; and when He says 'Faces beam with light, looking at their Lord', it means that they will see Him—and their reward in addition." They said: "Allah is not seen in this world or the next" quoting one of the ambiguous verses where Allah says, "No vision taketh in Him, but He taketh in all vision," Q.6: 103. But the prophet, who knew what Allah meant, said: "You will surely see your Lord."[1] And Allah said to Moses, " . . . Thou shalt not see me," Q.7: 139, but did not say, "I shall not be seen." Who then of the two is more deservedly followed: the Prophet who said, " You will surely see your Lord," or Jahm who said, " You shall not see your Lord?"

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[1] Lit.: 'But with truth'—*bi'l ḥaqq*—i.e. using truth as an instrument.

[2] Ibn Ḥanbal, joining the two verses reads: ". . And when He says to a thing 'Be' it is His word *al-ḥaqq*."

[3] Rodwell: "Onlooking towards their Lord."

[4] For the Orthodox view see the Ibāna: "Vision does not leave a mark on the thing seen, for the vision of the beholder remains in him." Klein, p. 63.

[5] Rodwell: "Hast thou not seen how thy Lord lengthened out the shadow." If this version is right, it would seem to favour the Jahmiya interpretation.

There are, moreover, traditions in the keeping of the learned, which they have from the Prophet, that those in Paradise shall see their Lord. This is held unanimously by all of them. There is the ḥadīth by Sufyān (+161), on the authority of Abū Isḥāq, on the authority of ʿĀmir b. Saʿd, concerning Allah's word: " Goodness itself and an increase of it for those who do good!" Q.10: 27. The 'increase', he said, is seeing Allah's face.[2]

Again, there is also the ḥadīth by Thābit al-Bunānī, on the authority of ʿAbdu'l Raḥmān b. Abū Laila (c. 702), who said: " When those in Paradise have settled there, a herald will cry saying: 'Dwellers of Paradise! Allah has allowed you a visit'. Then will the veil be lifted and they will look upon Allah. There is no God beside Him!"[3] We truly (p. 14a) hope that Jahm and his faction will be among those who will not see their Lord, and will be shut out from His presence, because Allah has said of the unbelievers: " Yes, they shall be shut out as by a veil from their Lord on that day." Q.83:15. If then the unbeliever and believer alike are both shut out from Allah, what advantage has the believer over the unbeliever? Praise be to Allah for not making us like Jahm and his faction and for making us followers not innovators.

XI. *Allah's Speech*: *His Attributes do not Invalidate His Unity*

BĀB: An exposition of the denial by the Jahmiya that Allah spoke to Moses.

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[1] *Kitāb al-Sunna*, p. 42.

[2] The Isnād in *K. al-Sunna* omits Sufyān and introduces Abū Bakr as the one who heard it from the Prophet, p. 51.

[3] There are several versions of the Tradition in *K. al-Sunna* and one enlarged version with some verbal changes. Part I, pp. 44, 45.

We said: "Why do you deny it?" They replied: "Allah has not spoken and does not speak. He has made something which enunciated for Him, and created a voice to be heard. Speech," they asserted, "requires an interior, a tongue and lips." We asked: "Is it proper for a created thing other than Allah to say, 'O Moses, I am your Lord', or to say, 'Verily, I am God: there is no God but me, therefore worship me and observe prayer for a remembrance of me'?" Q.20: 14. Who could possibly suppose[1] that someone other than Allah claimed lordship? If it were as the Jahmiya said that Allah made something, would that created thing say, "O Moses, I am Allah, the Lord of the world," having already said, "And discoursing did God discourse with Moses," Q.4: 162; and again, "And when Moses came at our set time and His Lord spake with him . . ." And again: "Thee above all men have I chosen by my commissions and by my speaking with thee?" Q.7: 141.

Apart from the text of the Qur'ān itself, what will they do with the ḥadīth of Al-A'mash (c. 767), on the authority of Khaithama, on the authority of 'Adī b. Ḥātim al-Ṭāī' (+686), who said, "Allah's Apostle has said, 'Everyone of you will be addressed by his Lord without an intermediary (lit: *tarjumān*)' "[2] (p. 14b) As for their contention that speech is only possible by means of an interior, a mouth, lips and tongue, did not Allah say to heaven and earth, ". . . Come ye, whether in obedience or against your will?" and they both said, "We come obedient." Q.41: 10. Do you suppose that they said it with an interior, a mouth, lips and tongue? And again, "And we constrained the mountains and the birds to join with David in our praise," Q.21: 79. Do you suppose that they joined in praise by means of an interior, a mouth, tongue and lips? It was Allah who made them speak as He desired. Allah, likewise, spoke as He willed without our mentioning an interior, mouth, lips and tongue.

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[1] Reading *yaz'am* instead of *za'ama*.

[2] *K. al-Sunna* p. 44.

Choked by these arguments Jahm said: " Allah spoke to Moses but His word was other than Himself." We: " Is this other created?" " Yes," he replied. We rejoined: " This is what you first maintained, except that you would ward off black looks."

Al-Zuhrī (+124) says in his ḥadīth: " When Moses heard his Lord speak, he asked, 'Are the words I heard your words, Lord?' 'Yes, Moses, I spoke to you in ten thousand tongues and have power of all the tongues and more, but I spoke to you within the limits of what your body can bear. Had I spoken more than that you would have died'. When Moses returned to his people, they said to him: 'Describe to us Allah's speech'. He replied: 'Praise be to Allah! How can I?' They said: 'What is it like?' He replied: 'What I heard was something like the noise of thunderbolts, which when it reached me was the sweetest sound you have ever heard'."[1]

We asked the Jahmiya: " Who other than Allah, speaking on the day of Resurrection, will say, '. . . O Jesus, Son of Mary: hast thou said unto mankind—Take me and my mother as two Gods, beside God'?" Q.5: 116. (p. 15a). They replied: " He will make something to enunciate for Him, as He did with Moses." We asked further: " Who other than Allah says: ' Surely, therefore, will we call those to account, to whom an Apostle hath been sent, and of the sent ones themselves will we certainly demand a reckoning. And with knowledge will we tell them . . .' " Q.7: 5, 6. They replied: " He will in all cases make something which will enunciate for Him." We then said: " You have grossly lied against Allah by asserting that He does not speak, and thus likening Him to the idols, who neither speak, nor move, nor pass from place to place, whom you serve instead of Allah."

When thus defeated in argument, they said: " Allah did speak, but His speech was created." We said: " You have, by this assertion, likened Allah to His creatures for, according to your belief, there was a time when He did not speak. So are the sons of men, who could not speak until He created speech for them. This is infidelity *Kufr* and *tashbīh*[1] together. Far be it from Allah! We say the opposite: Allah was always a speaker when He wished. We do not maintain that He was without speech until He created it; nor that He was without knowledge until He created it; nor do we say that He was without power, light or might until He created them for Himself."

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[1] *Kitāb al-Sunna* I, pp. 63, 64; II p. 153.

The Jahmiya had this to say in reply to our attributing these qualities: " If you say, 'Allah (was) and (so was) His light, Allah and His power, Allah and His might', you are speaking like the Christians, since you assert that Allah was ever existing and (so was) His light and His power." We replied: " We do not say, 'Allah was ever existing and His power', or 'Allah was ever existing (p. 15b) and His light', but we do say, 'Allah was ever existing in His power (*bi-qudratihi*), and in His light', (saying) neither when nor how He had power." They said : "You will never be unitarians (*muwaḥḥids*) until you say 'There was Allah and nothing else'." To this we replied: " By saying that Allah was ever existing in all His qualities, are we not truly describing the One God in all His qualities?"

We gave them the following example: " Tell us about this palm tree," we said. " Is it not made up of stump, stem, fibre, foliage, leaves and pith, and for all its attributes has it not one name? Likewise, Allah, who is to be compared to what is loftiest, is one God with all His qualities. We do not say that there was a time when He had no power until He created it for Himself, for to be without power is to be impotent; nor do we say that there was a time when He did not know, for he who does not know is ignorant. But we say, 'Allah was ever knowing, powerful and possessing' (saying) neither when nor how.

"And again, Allah referring to an infidel called al-Walīd b. Al-Walīd b. al-Mughīra al-Makhzūmī, said: 'Leave me to deal with him whom I have created, one (*waḥīd*)[1]', Q.74: 11. The one so named had eyes, ears, a tongue, lips, hands, feet and many members, and is yet named '*waḥīd*', all his qualities notwithstanding. Likewise, Allah, who is to be compared to what is loftiest, is with all His qualities one God."

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[1] Comparing God to man.

XII. *Where Allah is and Where He is Not*

BĀB: An exposition of the denial by the Jahmiya that Allah is on the throne.

(p. 16a) We asked them: "Why do you deny that Allah is on the throne when He has said: 'The God of Mercy sitteth on His throne'? Q.20: 4. And again, '. . . Who in six days created the Heavens and the Earth . . . then mounted His throne'," Q.25: 60. They replied: "He is under the seven earths as He is on the throne; He is in heaven, on earth and in every place; there is no place where He is not, nor is He in one place to the exclusion of any other." And they quoted the verse: "And He is God in the Heavens and on the Earth!" Q.6: 3. We said: "The Muslims know of many a place where there is no trace whatsoever of the might of the Lord." They said: "And where is that?" We replied: "Your bodies, your insides and pigs' insides, in privies and unclean places, in all of which there is no trace of the Lord's might.

"Allah told us that He is in Heaven, saying: 'What! are ye sure that He who is in Heaven will not cleave the Earth beneath you? . . . Or are you sure that He who is in Heaven will not send against you a stone-charged whirlwind'? Q.67: 16, 17. And again, '. . . The good word riseth up to Him', Q.35: 11. And again, '. . . O Jesus! Verily I will cause thee to die, and will take thee up to myself', Q.3: 48. And again, '. . . But God took him up to Himself', Q.4: 156. And again, 'All beings in Heaven and in Earth are His, and they who are in His presence . . .' Q.21: 19. And again, 'They fear their Lord who is above them' . . .' Q.16: 52. And again, '. . . The Master of those ascents', Q.70: 3. And again, 'And He is the Supreme over (lit: above) His servants . . .' Q.6: 18. And again, '. . . He is the High, the Great', Q.2: 256. This then tells us that He is in heaven[1].

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[1] Ibn Ḥanbal manipulates the text to suit his argument. Rodwell's more exact translation runs: "Leave me alone to deal with him whom I have created."

"The following verses show us that all beneath Him are villainous: 'Verily the hypocrites shall be in the lowest abyss of the fire . . .' Q.4: 144. And again, 'And they who believe not shall say, 'O our Lord! Show us those of the jinn and men who led us astray: both of them will we put under our feet (p. 16b) that they may be of the humbled (lit: the lower ones)' " Q.41: 29. We added: " Do you not know that Iblīs has his place and the devils have theirs? Allah and Iblīs cannot both be in one place. The meaning of Allah's word: 'He is God in heaven and upon earth' is that to him belong those in heaven and those on earth; that He is on the throne and that His knowledge embraces all that lies beneath the throne; and that there is no place not embraced by His knowledge. As He has said, '. . . That ye may know that God hath power over all things, and that God in his knowledge embraceth all things'! Q.65: 12.

"An example illustrating this is that of a man holding in his hand a cup of clear crystal full of a limpid draught; every man's eye takes in the cup without each man lying within the cup. And Allah, who is to be likened to what is loftiest, takes in all His creation without being in any of it. Another apt illustration is that of a man who built a house with all its accessories. He then closed the door and went out: he will not fail, thereupon, to know the number of rooms in his house and their size without being inside it. And Allah, who is to be likened to what is loftiest, embraces all that He has created, knowing how and what it is, without being inside any of His creation."

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[1] Later orthodoxy condemned this as *tashbīh* and *tajsīm*: " Lo, He is seated firmly upon His throne (*'arsh*), after the manner which He has said, . . . which is far removed from contact and fixity of location and being established and being enveloped and being removed. The throne does not carry Him, but the throne and those that carry it are carried by the grace of His power and mastered by His grasp, etc. A short Creed by al-Gahzālī, quoted from Macdonald's " *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Law*," p. 301.

XIII. *Allah is by His Knowledge Omnipresent*

BĀB: An exposition of the Jahmiya interpretation of Allah's word: "... Three persons speak not privately together, but He is their fourth ..." Q.58: 8.

We said (referring them to the opening of the same verse), "Allah says: 'Dost thou not see that God knoweth all that is in the Heavens and all that is in the Earth', by which Allah informs us (p. 17a) that He knows what is in the Heavens and on Earth. To which He added: '... Three persons speak not privately together, but He is their fourth ...'—that is, He is so by His knowledge; and, '... Nor five, but He is their sixth'—by His knowledge: and '... Nor fewer nor more, but wherever they be He is with them ...'—by His knowledge: and, '... then on the day of resurrection He will tell them of their deeds: for God knoweth all things'. The verse thus begins and ends with Allah's knowledge."

XIV. *A Refutation that Allah is in Every Place*

BĀB: If you wish to know that the Jahmī lies against Allah, in saying that Allah is in every place and is not in one place to the exclusion of any other, say: "Was there not Allah when there was nothing else?" He will assent. Then say: "When He made a thing, did He do so inside or outside of Himself?" Three possibilities follow: If he asserts that Allah created all things within Himself, including jinn, men and devils, he denies the faith. If he says that He created them outside of Himself and then entered into them, including all the wild, squalid and vile places—this too is infidelity. And if he says He created them outside of Himself and then did not enter into them, he has abandoned his position for that of the *ahl al-Sunna*.

XV. *A Refutation of the Jahmī Position Regarding Allah's Knowledge*

BĀB: If you wish to know that the Jahmī does not profess Allah's knowledge, say to him: "Allah says, '... Yet nought of His knowledge shall they grasp', Q.2: 256. And again, 'But God is Himself witness of what He hath sent down to thee: in His knowledge hath He sent it down to thee', Q.4: 164. And again, 'But if they answer you not[1], then know that it hath been sent down to you in the wisdom (lit: knowledge) of God only', Q.11: 17. And again, '. . . No fruit cometh forth from its coverings, neither doth any female conceive, nor is she delivered but with His knowledge'," Q.41: 47.

Ask the Jahmī if he professes or does not profess this knowledge of Allah which has been given us by signs (p. 17b) and proofs. If he deny such knowledge, he has denied the faith. If he says: 'Allah's knowledge is newly originated', he has denied the faith by asserting that there was a time when Allah did not know until He made it—and then knew. And if he says, 'Allah's knowledge is uncreated and unoriginated', he has abandoned his position for that of the ahl al-Sunna.

XVI. *A Refutation that Allah is in His Creation*

BĀB: An exposition of Allah's reminder in the Qur'ān: " . . . He is with you," Q.57: 4, which has several meanings.

When Allah said to Moses (addressing him and his brother Aaron): " I am with you both. I will hearken . . . " Q.20: 48, it means 'I will defend you both'. And again, " . . . In company with a second only! When they two were in the cave; when the Prophet said to his companion, 'Be not distressed. Verily, God is with us' . . . " Q.9: 40—it means to defend us. And again, " . . . How oft, by God's will hath a small host vanquished a numerous host! And God is with the steadfastly enduring," Q.2: 250—meaning giving them the victory over their enemy. And again, " Be not faint hearted then[2] . . . and invite not the infidels to peace when ye have the upper hand, for God is with you," Q.47: 37—meaning victory over the enemy. And again, " . . . But they cannot hide themselves from God . . . He is with them," Q.4: 108—meaning by His knowledge of them. And again, " And when the hosts came in view of one another, the comrades of Moses said, 'We are surely overtaken'. He said, 'By no means—for my Lord is with me—He will guide me'," Q.26: 61, 62—meaning help against Pharaoh.

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[1] There is a slight verbal inaccuracy in the MS with the introduction of the word *tawallau.*

[2] The MS inserts '. . . and grieve not . . .' which is not in the Qur'ān.

When Jahm's assertion that Allah was (in and) with His creation was refuted, he said: " He is in everything, not contiguous nor separated." We then asked how He could be in everything without being either contiguous or separate. This he could not answer, saying 'without' (how)[1], in order to deceive the ignorant with this make-believe.

We said (p. 18a) to him: " Will there not be Heaven, Hell, the throne and the air at the Resurrection?" " Yes,"[2] he said. " Where then will our Lord be"?, we asked. He replied: " He will be there in all things as He was in the world in all things." We said: " You then believe that Allah will be divided between the throne, the garden, the fire and the air." Then their lie against Allah became evident.

XVII. *A Refutation that 'Allah' is a Created Name*

The Jahmī asserted that 'Allah' in the Qur'ān is a created name.[3] We asked: " What was His name before He created this name?" They replied: "He had no name." We said: "It follows, therefore, that He was ignorant before He created knowledge for Himself, and had no light and no power until He created them for Himself." The evil man then knew that Allah put him to shame and uncovered his nakedness by the assertion that Allah in the Qur'ān was a created name.

We said to the Jahmiya: " If a person should swear falsely by Allah, the only true God, it would be no perjury, since he swore by something created and not by the Creator." Allah again put him to shame.

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[1] MS بلا

[2] MS بلا instead of بلى

[3] See al-Ash'arī's *Ibāna*, tr. Klein, p. 76.

We said to him: "Did not the Prophet, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Ali, the Caliphs which followed them and the rulers and judges, make men swear by Allah, the only true God? But according to you they were wrong, as the Prophet, (p. 18b) and those who followed him, should have sworn by Him who bore the name of Allah, and should have had as their creed, 'There is no God but He who created (the name) Allah', otherwise their profession of the unity (of God) would be wrong." Allah disgraced him for telling lies concerning Him. But we say that 'Allah' is Allah; 'Allah' is not a name: all things are names except 'Allah'.

If Allah did not speak, how did He create all things? Is there another? He created all things by His speech and His word, seeing that He says: "Our word to a thing when we will it, is but to say 'Be', and it is" Q.16: 42. They said: "The meaning of 'Our word to a thing . . .' is that our wanting it brings it into being." We said: "Why then the addition '. . . is but to say to it . . .'?" And they replied: "Everything in the Qur'ān has its (ordinary) meaning. Allah speaks in the Arabic idiom: 'The wall spoke, or the palm spoke, and fell down'—but in fact, say nothing"[1]. We said: "Is it this on which you base your judgement?" They said, "Yes." We then said: "If Allah did not speak, as you believe, by what means did He then create all things?" They replied: "By His power." We then said: "Is it a thing?" This they admitted. We asked: "Is His power one of the created things!" They agreed. And so we said: "It looks as if He created by means of a created thing. You have, thereby, contraverted and contradicted the Qur'ān, where Allah said: '. . . God is the Creator of all things . . .' Q.13: 17, thus informing us that He Himself creates. Again, '. . . Is there a creator other than God . . .?' Q.35: 3—that is, there is no one else, while you have asserted that something other than He did the creating." Far be this teaching of the Jahmiya from Allah, the Exalted'

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[1] '*fa-'l Jahmiya,*' which occurs here in the MS looks like a transcriber's error and makes no sense.

XVIII. *Concerning the Ḥadīth in Which the Qur'ān Calls Allah 'Lord'*

BĀB: Concerning the assertion made by the Jahmiya that the Qur'ān is created (on the authority) of certain ḥadīth.[1]

(p.19a) They said: "It is related in the ḥadīth that the Qur'ān will appear to its owner in the form of an emaciated youth, asking, 'Do you know me?'—'Who are you?'—'I am the Qur'ān, for whose sake you suffered thirst by day and spent sleepless nights'; and taking him to Allah, the Qur'ān will say, 'O my Lord!'" It is on such traditions that they base their claim that the Qur'ān is created. But the words mean not that the Qur'ān will appear, but its reward which will address Allah as Lord.

XIX. *A Refutation that Heaven and Hell will Pass Away*

BĀB: The interpretation by the Jahmiya of Allah's words: "He is the first and the last," Q.57: 3.

They spoke the truth when they said that Allah was the first before creation. But went on to say that He would be the last after creation, when there will be nothing left: no earth, no garden, no fire; no reward and no punishment; no throne and no seat,[2] asserting that there would be nothing with Allah who would be the last as He was (the first). Many were thus led astray.

We said: "Allah says that those in the Garden will remain there perpetually, saying: '. . . (Gardens) in which lasting pleasure shall be theirs', Q.9: 21. And again, '(Gardens) . . . therein to abide eternally'. And again, 'Its food and its shades are perpetual', Q.13: 35; and if Allah said 'permanent' it means that it will never be cut off.

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[1] There are several versions of the tradition in *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, pp. 463, 480, 481, 491. The traditions quoted are from the books of tradition by Abū Dāūd, Tirmidhī, Nasā'ī, Ibn Ḥibbān, Ibn Abū Shaiba and Tabarānī.

[2] The seat or *kursī* is said to be Allah's footstool. Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila, p. 28.

And again, 'Nor forth from it shall they be cast for ever', Q.15: 48. And again, 'The life to come is the mansion that abideth'. Q.40: 42. And again, '. . . Truly the future mansion is life indeed! Would that they knew this'! Q.29: 64. And again, '. . . Wherein they shall abide for ever', Q.18: 2. And again, 'And as to those whose faces shall have become white, they shall be within the mercy of God: therein shall they abide for ever', Q.3: 103. And again, 'And with abundant fruits, unfailing, unforbidden', Q.56: 31, 32. There are many more such verses in the Qur'ān.

Allah spoke of the dwellers of the Fire and said: '. . . To die shall never be decreed them, (p. 19b) nor shall aught of its torment be made light to them', Q.35: 33. And again, '. . . These of my mercy shall despair', Q.29: 22. And again, 'Are these they on whom . . . God would not bestow mercy'?[1] Q.7: 47. And again, 'And they shall cry: 'O Malec! Would that thy Lord would make an end of us!' He saith: 'Here must ye remain'! Q.43: 77. And again, '. . . It is now one whether we be impatient, or endure with patience. We have no escape', Q.14: 25. And again, '(The fire of Gehenna to) abide therein for aye. Of all creatures they are the worst', Q.98: 5. And again, '. . . So oft as their skins', Q.4: 59. And again, 'So oft as they . . . would fain come forth thence, back shall they be turned into it', Q.22: 22. And again, 'It shall verily rise over them like a vault', Q.104: 8. There are many more such verses in the Qur'ān.

As for Heaven and Earth, they will have vanished since their inhabitants will have been moved to the Garden and the Fire. As for the throne, it will not perish nor pass away because it is the vault of the Garden and Allah is upon it. As for Allah's word, 'Everything shall perish except Himself (lit: His face)', Q.28: 88, this means, that Allah had removed all those who were upon it (i.e. the earth).

When the angels, coveting survival, said: 'now have the earth's inhabitants perished', Allah sent down a verse directed to heaven and earth (saying), 'You shall perish', And He said, 'Everything'—that is every living thing—'shall perish'—that is shall die—'except His face'—that is, that He is the living One who will not die. The angels were thus certain of death.

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[1] Ibn Ḥanbal here attributes these words to Allah. See Baiḍāwī on the verse.

We said to the Jahmiya—when they asserted that Allah was in every place, and that there was no place where he was not: " Explain to us Allah's words: '. . . And when God manifested Himself to the mountain He turned it into dust', Q.7: 139. Why did He have to reveal Himself to the mountain if He were in it, as you assert? He would not have revealed Himself to a thing, if He were already in it. But being on the throne, He revealed Himself to something outside of Himself and the mountain saw something (p. 20a) it had never seen before."

We said to Jahm: " Allah has light." He said: " Allah is all light." We said: " Seeing that Allah has said: 'And the earth shall shine with the light of her Lord . . .' Q.39: 69, He has told us that He had light." We said further: " Since you assert that Allah is in every place and is light, why does not His light illume a dark room as a lighted wick does when introduced into a room?" Their lies against Allah then became evident. Allah's mercy on those who are wise in the things of Allah, who rejecting anything said against the Book and the Sunna, accept the teaching of the learned, which is that of the Emigrants and the Helpers, and turn away from the religion of Jahm and his factions. Allah knows best!

Allah's blessing on Muḥammad and his household. There is no power nor strength save in Allah, the High, the Mighty. Our sufficiency is Allah and He is an excellent protector! O Allah bless Muḥammad and his household. Salute him with many salutations. Allah's pleasure on all the Companions of His Apostle.

END

APPENDIX I

Mu'tazilī Creed: A[1]

The Mu'tazila are all agreed: That the world has a maker, eternal, mighty and living. (These attributes are) not personal subsistences. (*la lima'āni*). He is not a body, accidence or substance; He is one and self-sufficient[2]; He is beyond the reach of sense, just and wise; He does no evil nor does He desire it; He has imposed religious obligations with a view to reward, which He enables us to perform, doing away with (every) excuse. His reward is certain.

They are all agreed on the obligation of sending something down (from God) when it seems good (to Him). That a *Rasūl* must necessarily bring a law or revive one sunk into oblivion, or introduce a benefit not brought by another. That Muḥammad is the last of the Prophets whose attesting miracle is the Qur'ān. That faith is word, knowledge and works. That the believer will go to Heaven. That there is an intermediate state, to the effect that a (Muslim) sinner should be named neither believer not unbeliever; those who teach *Irjā'* oppose us in the interpretation of Faith and the intermediate state, calling a (Muslim) sinner a believer. That man's actions are not created for him (by God).

They are all agreed in associating themselves with the Prophet's Companions, but differ regarding 'Uthmān after the things which he did; but most of them associate themselves with him . . . Most dissociate themselves from Mu'āwiya and 'Amr ibn al-'Ās. They are all agreed on the obligation to order what is commendable and prohibit what is evil. Moreover, their many learned men have written a number of works, such as Ibn Yazdādh's Maṣābīḥ and others. This completes all on which they are agreed.

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[1] Ibn al-Murtaḍā: *Al-Munya wa-'l Amal*, p. 6.

[2] Reading *ghaniyan* for '*aynan*.

Mu'tazilī Creed: B[1]

The Mu'tazila are agreed that God is one without an equal; He hears and sees; He is not a body, nor figure, nor corporate mass, nor form, nor flesh, nor blood, nor person, nor substance, nor *accidence*; He is without colour, taste, smell, touch, heat, cold, moisture, dryness, length, breadth, depth; He is neither joined nor separate; He does not move nor is He at rest; He is not divisible; He has no parts, sections, limbs, members; He is without directions, without right or left, before, behind, above, below. Place does not encompass Him, time does not pass Him by. He neither touches any place, nor is He away from it, nor does He indwell it. No description which applies to creatures in so far as they are created may be applied to Him, nor may He be described as finite. He cannot be described by measure or movement in any direction; He is not confined within limits; neither begetting nor begotten; measures do not encompass Him, nor do veils screen Him; nor senses perceive Him. He cannot be compared to man, there being no resemblance whatsoever between Him and created beings. He is untouched by infirmities or disabilities. He resembles nothing that can be thought of or imagined. He has not ceased to be the first and foremost, preceding all created things and existing before their creation. He has not ceased to be knowing, mighty, living and will not cease so to be. Eyes do not see Him, sight does not perceive Him, imagination cannot comprehend Him, nor ears hear Him. He is a thing unlike things: knowing, mighty, living, but unlike the knowing, the mighty and the living. He alone is eternal and there is no eternal nor god beside Him. He has no associate in His kingdom, no vizir in His Government, no assistant in making and creating what He has created and made. He did not create according to an earlier pattern. The creation of any one thing is neither easier nor more difficult than the creation of any other thing. He neither draws profit nor suffers loss. He is untouched by joy or pleasure, hurt or pain. He has no limit and there is no end to Him. He is not transient and is untouched by weakness or decline. His holiness precludes intercourse, taking a female companion and begetting children.

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[1] Al-Ash'arī: *Maqālāt*, I. p. 148 f.

Mu'tazilī Creed: C[1]

The creed generally accepted by all the Mu'tazila is that Allah is eternal; eternity being the most characteristic description of his essence. They utterly reject (the ascription of) eternal qualities, saying that He is knowing, mighty and living as part of His essence; not that knowledge, power and life are eternal attributes or personal subsistences *ma'ānī* inherent in Him. For if the qualities should partake of His eternity which is the exclusive description of His essence, they would partake of His divinity.

They are agreed that His word is originated and created in a substrate, and is both letter and sound; the same is written in books as an imitation (or expression) of the same; being in a substrate it is *accidens* and therefore perishable.

They are agreed that will, hearing and sight are not personal subsistences inherent in His essence, but differ as to the manner of their existence and as to what their substrates are. All repudiate the vision of God with the eyes in the next world. They also repudiate *tashbīh* (comparing God to man) in every way: whether in respect of direction, place, form, body, extension, movement, removal, change and passibility. They enjoined that the *mutashābihāt* (ambiguous verses) be interpreted allegorically (*tā'wīl*). These things they called unity.

They are agreed that man can and does create his good and evil deeds, so as to merit reward or punishment in the next world. The Lord is pure and no evil or wrong-doing, no infidelity or rebellion can be ascribed to

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[1] Al-Shahrastānī: *al-Milal wa'l Niḥal*, pp. 30, 31.

Him. If wrong-doing were of His making, He would Himself be a wrong-doer, just as doing justice would make Him just. They are agreed that the Wise will do nothing but what is good and salutary; wisdom entails a concern for the welfare of the creature. They disagreed as to whether God was compelled to do the best (*al-aṣlaḥ*) and bestow grace (*luṭf*). These things they called justice.

They are agreed that a believer leaving the world obedient and penitent deserves a reward; compensation and the bestowal of grace are other than reward proper. If one, however, should leave the world unrepentant, with a grave sin, he will deserve eternal fire, but his punishment will be lighter than that which will be meted out to unbelievers. These things they called threat and promise.

They are agreed that essential knowledge and gratitude for mercies are man's obligation before the coming of revelation: good and evil must be known by reason as must the pursuit of good and the rejection of evil. Religious obligations, sent down to man by the prophets to try and test him, are God's favours: " That he who should perish might perish with a clear token before him, and that he who liveth might live with it." (Q.8: 44).

They disagreed on the Imamate as to whether it was by designation or election.

APPENDIX II

Maimonides on Outside Influences:

We have in the following quotation from Maimonides (1135–1204). a succinct and early statement in support of our thesis that outside influences played an important part in the development of Muslim thought.

" You should also know that whatever the Mohammedans, that is the Mu'tazila and the Ash'ariya, said on these subjects, consists in nothing but theories founded on propositions which are taken from the works of those

Greeks and Syrian scholars who attempted to oppose the system of the philosophers, and to refute their arguments. The following was the cause of that opposition. At the time when the Christian Church brought the Greeks and the Syrians into its fold, and promulgated its well-known dogmas, the opinions of the philosophers were current among those nations: and whilst philosophy flourished, kings became defenders of the Christian faith. The learned Greek and Syrian Christians of the age, seeing that their dogmas were unquestionably exposed to severe attacks from the existing philosophical systems, laid the foundation for the science of Dogmatics; they commenced by putting forth such propositions as would support their doctrines, and be useful for the refutation of opinions opposed to the fundamental principles of the Christian religion.

When the Mohammedans caused Arabic translations of the writings of the Philosophers to be made, those criticisms were likewise translated. When the opinions of John the Grammarian, of Ibn 'Adi, and of kindred authors on these subjects were made accessible to them, they adopted them, and imagined that they had arrived at the solution of important problems. Moreover, they selected from the opinions of the ancient philosophers whatever seemed serviceable to their purposes, although later critics had proved that those theories were false; as, e.g., the theories of atoms and of a *vacuum*. They believed that the discussions of those authors were of a general character, and contained propositions useful for the defence of positive religion. At a subsequent period the same theories were more fully developed, and presented an aspect unknown to those theologians of the Greeks and other nations who were the immediate successors of the Philosophers. At a later time, when the Mohammedans adopted certain peculiar theological theories they were naturally obliged to defend them; and when their new theories again became the subject of controversy among them, each party laid down such propositions as suited their special doctrine."[1]

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[1] Moses Maimonides: *The Guide for the Perplexed*, tr. M. Friedländer, pp. 108, 109.

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